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TRUE TALES OF THE PLAINS

By BUFFALO BILL
(COL. W. F. CODY)

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Get there first and dont miss
W. F. Cody
"Buffalo Bill"

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TRUE TALES
OF
THE PLAINS

By BUFFALO BILL
(WILLIAM F. CODY)
Frontiersman and late Chief of Scouts, U. S. Army

NEW YORK
CUPPLES & LEON COMPANY
1908

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TRUE TALES OF THE PLAINS

CHAPTER I

HOW I KILLED MY FIRST INDIAN

In 1857 I was barely eleven when I shot my first Indian. He was a chief. I knew that from his head-dress. His name I never learned. Here is the story:

My parents, with their seven children, had moved from Iowa to Kansas three years earlier. My father had taken up a claim in Salt Creek Valley and built a comfortable home. But he was not to enjoy the good days that seemed to be dawning for us.

Kansas just then was torn by the slavery feud, and in the bitter strife of the time, my father, after making an anti-slavery speech at a nearby post-trader's store, was mobbed and his life threatened. On this occasion one of my father's irate audience—a man, Charles Dunne by name—

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stabbed my loved parent in the side. At the time of the attack, I stood unarmed over my wounded father's body and tried with childish strength to fight off his assailants; but though he escaped with life in him from the place where he was assaulted, he subsequently succumbed to his injuries, and in the following spring he died. This calamity deprived my mother and our family of a worthy and esteemed head of the household—his death being an incident in the horrid internecine strife that eventuated in the tragedies of the Civil War.

At this eventful era in the history of my loved family, I was the oldest son, just ten years of age. My fragile little mother had no one but me to turn to for help in supporting her large family. To make things worse the estate became involved in litigation. To save the home, money must be earned. I could ride any horse alive. I had a knack of shooting straight, and I knew something about herding cattle. I thought these qualities might earn me a living. They did.

A firm of overland freighters—Russell, Majors & Waddell—were at Leavenworth. One of them, Mr. Majors, had been a friend of my father. I asked him for a job as "extra" on one of his wagon trains. The pay was $40 a month; a fortune it seemed to me then. The

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work was the sort usually entrusted to a grown man, and it meant not only perpetual hustling, but a lot of danger as well. For the plains in those days were anything but free from Indians. This latter thought frightened even my brave mother. Boy-like, I was delighted at the idea.

Mr. Majors said he would take me on as "extra" for one trip. If I did well I could have a regular job. I resolved to do miracles as an "extra." The "train" was made up of twenty-five loaded wagons each carrying 7,000 pounds, each drawn by six yoke of oxen and guided by a "bull-whacker" (a driver with a long, loud-cracking whip). Then there was a bunch of loose cattle. On this occasion the "train" was made up of only three wagons and we were driving a large herd of beef cattle to Fort Kearny for the use of Col. Albert Sydney Johnston and his command, who were on their way to Salt Lake to fight the Mormons. I was only one of several "extras." My duties were to assist in driving and herding the cattle, and make myself generally useful when we pitched camp. It was a busy trip till we came to Plum Creek, thirty-five miles west of Fort Kearny. Though we always set guard, no Indians had appeared.

One noon, however, when we stopped for dinner, and were loafing about on the grass waiting for the pot to boil, we heard a scathing volley of

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shots from a copse. Some bullets and a dozen or more arrows whistled into camp. Everybody had jumped up at the first shot. But three of our men tumbled over at once as if they had been tripped up. Then a number of things happened almost too quickly to describe.

Two bands of Indians were galloping toward us. One band stampeded and ran off our cattle, while the other "rushed" us. Our men gave them a warm welcome and sent them back on the run. But the fight was not over. The "braves" only cantered out of range. There they were joined by others. They outnumbered us eight or ten to one. We could not hope to stand against such a multitude. We bolted for the South Platte River with the savages at our heels, and found shelter behind the steep banks. From there we opened fire again and drove the following redskins once more out of range. I blazed away with the best of them, but in the confusion no one could tell whether he or some one else dropped the man he fired at. So I can't say whether or not I did any execution.

Frank McCarthy, our boss, said our one chance was to follow the Platte River to Fort Kearny, keeping out of sight under its banks. So the thirty-five-mile march began, through knee-deep water and quicksand. Half a day we kept it up. I was dead tired, but it was no time for rest or

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INDIANS ON THE WAR PATH.

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complaining. Just the same, by nightfall my short legs wouldn't keep up with the procession. I dropped back, little by little, still plodding on as fast as my aching feet could move. We thought we had given the Indians the slip, but I still lugged my short heavy rifle. It was a muzzle-loading "Mississippi Jaeger," and carried a slug and two buckshot to each charge.

The moon had risen, and I was trying to catch up with the rest. Suddenly, in front of me, and at the top of the high bank, I saw, against the moon, the head and high war bonnet of an Indian chief. He was bent double. The men ahead could not see him, but he had his gun leveled at them. I knew if he fired he could scarcely miss at that range. Some one of my friends must be killed. I had halted at sight of him and he didn't see me. I had no time to think out the situation.

I brought up my rifle and took what aim I could in the deceptive moonlight. When my "sights" were just below the war bonnet's feathers I pulled the trigger.

The stillness of the river was split by a roar as the report echoed from bank to bank. Down tumbled the chief, over the edge, rolling over and over like a shot rabbit, till he landed plump in the water.

A yell from the band he had led, and a score

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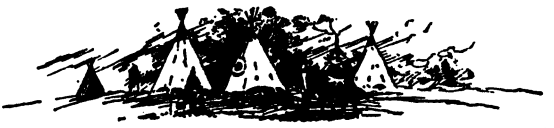
of Indians swarmed up to the bank. But our men drove them back and they gave up the attack as a bad job. At dawn we limped, worn out, into Fort Kearny. The soldiers there started on a wild-goose chase for the Indians. They were never caught. The slashed, scalped bodies of our dead were found beside the wrecked, looted wagons.

But the proudest minute I'd ever known came when Frank McCarthy swung me up on to his shoulder in the Fort Kearny barracks and announced to everybody there:

"Boys, Billy's downed his first Injun! And the kid couldn't have made a prettier job of it if he'd been a thirty-year scout!"



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CHAPTER II

MY FIRST TRAPPING ADVENTURES

I was thirteen. My mother was building a hotel for the use of passing gold hunters. For this was late in 1859, when the gold fever swept America and all roads led to Pike's Peak. Our Salt Creek Valley home lay on one of the most traveled routes.

Hotel building and furnishing are not on the free list. So I wanted to help raise money for our Valley Grove House. With an older boy, named Dave Phillips, I planned a trapping trip. Winter was setting in when we started.

We bought an ox-team and wagon to transport the traps, camp outfit, and provisions, and took along a large supply of ammunition, besides extra rifles. Our destination was the Republican River. It coursed more than a hundred and fifty

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miles from Leavenworth, but the country about it was reputed rich in beaver. I acted as scout on the journey, going ahead to pick out trails, locate camping grounds, and look out for breakers. The information concerning the beaver proved correct; the game was indeed so plentiful that we concluded to pitch a permanent camp and see the winter out.

We chose a hollow in a side hill, and enlarged it to the dimensions of a decent sized room. A chimney fashioned of stones, the open lower part doing double duty as a cook-stove and heater; the bed was spread in the rear, and the wagon-cover sheltered the entrance. A corral of poles was built for the oxen, and one corner of it protected by boughs. Altogether we accounted our winter quarters thoroughly satisfactory and agreeable.

We had seen no Indians on our trip out, and were not concerned in that quarter, though we were too good plainsmen to relax our vigilance. There were other foes, as we discovered the first night in our new quarters. We were aroused by a commotion in the corral where the oxen were confined, and hurrying out with our rifles, we found a huge bear intent upon a feast of beef. The oxen were bellowing in terror, one of them dashing crazily about the enclosure, and the other so badly hurt that it could not get up.

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Phillips, who was in the lead, fired first, but succeeded only in wounding the bear. Pain was now added to the savagery of hunger, and the infuriated monster rushed upon Phillips. Dave leaped back, but his foot slipped on a bit of ice, and he went down with a thud, his rifle flying from his hand as he struck.

A bullet from my rifle entered the distended mouth of the onrushing bear and pierced the brain, and the huge mass fell lifeless almost across Dave's body.

Phillips' nerves loosened with a snap, and he laughed for very relief as he seized my hands.

"That's the time you saved my life, old fellow!" said he. "Perhaps I can do as much for you some time."

"That's the first bear I ever killed," I said, more interested in that topic than in the one Dave held forth on.

One of the oxen was found to be mortally hurt, and a bullet ended its misery. I then took my first lesson in the art of skinning a bear.

Dave's chance to square his account with me came a fortnight later. We were chasing a bunch of elk, when I fell, and discovered that I could not rise.

"I'm afraid I have broken my leg," I said, as Dave ran to me.

Phillips had once been a medical student, and

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he examined the leg with a professional eye. "You're right, Billy; the leg's broken," he reported.

Then he went to work to improvise splints and bind up my leg; and this done, he took me on his back and bore me to the dugout. Here the leg was stripped, and set in carefully prepared splints, and the whole bound up securely.

The outlook was unpleasant, cheerfully as one might regard it. Living in the scoop of a side hill when one is strong and able to get about and keep the blood coursing is one thing; living there pent up through a tedious winter is quite another. Dave meditated as he worked away at a pair of crutches.

"Tell you what I think I'd better do," said he. "The nearest settlement is some eighty miles away, and I can get there and back in twenty days. Suppose I make the trip, get a team for our wagon, and come back for you?"

The idea of being left alone and well-nigh helpless struck dismay to my heart, but there was no help for it and I assented. Dave put matters into shipshape, piled wood in the dugout, cooked a quantity of food and put it where I could reach it without rising, and fetched several days' supply of water. Mother, ever mindful of my education, had put some school-books in the wagon, and Dave placed these beside the food and water,

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When Phillips finally set out, driving the surviving ox before him, he left behind a very lonely and homesick boy.

During the first day of my confinement I felt too desolate to eat, much less to read; but as I grew accustomed to solitude, I derived real pleasure from the companionship of books. Perhaps in all my life I never extracted so much benefit from study as during that brief period of enforced idleness, when it was my sole means of making the dragging hours endurable. Dave, I knew, could not return in less than twenty days, and one daily task, never neglected, was to cut a notch in the stick that marked the humdrum passages of the days. Within the week I could hobble about on my crutches for a short distance; after that I felt more secure.

A fortnight passed. And one day, weary with my studies, I fell asleep over my books. Some one touched my shoulder, and looking up I saw an Indian in war-paint and feathers.

"How?" said I, with a show of friendliness, though I knew the brave was on the war-path.

Half a score of bucks followed at the heels of the first, squeezing into the little dugout until there was barely room for them to sit down.

With sinking heart I saw them enter, but I plucked up spirit again when the last, a chief,

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pushed in, for in this warrior I recognized an Indian that I had once done a good turn.

Whatever Lo's faults, he never forgets a kindness any more than he forgets an injury. The chief, who went by the name of Rain-in-the-Face, at once recognized me and asked me why I was in that place. This chief was the father of Rain-in-the-Face who, in a later year, killed General Custer at the memorable battle of the Little Big Horn. I displayed my bandages, and related the mishap that had made them necessary, and refreshed the chief's memory of a certain occasion when a blanket and provisions had drifted his way. Rain-in-the-Face replied, with proper gravity, that he and his chums were out after scalps, and confessed to designs upon mine, but in consideration of Auld Lang Syne, he would spare the paleface boy.

Auld Lang Syne, however, did not spare the blankets and provisions, and the bedizened crew stripped the dugout almost bare of supplies; but I was thankful enough to see the back of the last of them.

Two days later a blizzard set in. I took an inventory, and found that, economy considered, I had food for a week; but as the storm would surely delay Dave, I put myself on half rations.

Three weeks were now gone, and I looked for Dave momentarily; but as night followed day,

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and day grew into night again, I was given over to keen anxiety. Had Phillips lost his way? Had he failed to locate the snow-covered dugout? Had he perished in the storm? Had he fallen victim to the Indians ? These and like questions haunted me continually. Study became impossible, and I lost my appetite for what food there was left; but the tally on the stick was kept.

The twenty-ninth day dawned. Starvation stalked into the dugout. The wood, too, was well-nigh gone. But great as was my physical suffering my mental distress was greater. I sat before a handful of fire, shivering and hungry, wretched and despondent.

Hark! Was that my name? Choking with emotion, unable to articulate, I listened intently. Yes, it was my name, and Dave's familiar voice; and with all my remaining energy I made an answering call.

My voice enabled Phillips to locate the dugout, and a passage was cleared through the snow. And when I saw the door open, the tension on my nerves let go and I wept "like a girl."

"God bless you, Dave!" I cried, as I clasped my friend around the neck.

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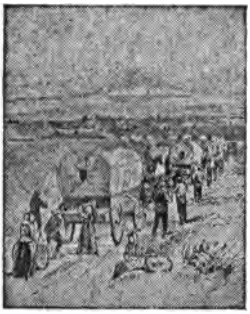
CHAPTER III

CONTRIBUTED LIFE STORIES OF THE NARRATOR



An Immigrant Train.

AT this history of my career, it may be fitting in me, for the reader's enlightenment, to introduce here two sketches kindly penned about me by two writers—one narrating my "Life Story," which appeared some time ago, and the other by a contributor in 1901 to the Werner Supplements to the notable *Encyclopædia Britannica,* issued at Akron, Ohio, which I am permitted to incorporate in these pages. I give them as kind and gracious accounts of my career, which, I doubt not, will be appreciated by the reader as they are warmly and heartily appreciated by myself. They are here given in the order I have above referred to them:

"Born on the frontier in the early '40's, Colonel W. F. Cody is a striking exhibit of the class

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of pioneers and settlers that left the shores of Europe, crossed the Atlantic, and, with resting spells on its shores, continued in each successive generation trekking across the vast continent; over mountains, vales, rivers and vast prairie lands toward the setting sun. His ancestral stock dates from a combination of Spanish-English-Irish that adventured in 1730 across the Atlantic, and increased and multiplied in the Eastern and Middle States. His immediate branch crossed the Alleghanies into Ohio along the lakes, across Indiana and Illinois to the west bank of the Mississippi, where he was born near the present city of Davenport, Iowa. At five years of age his father and outfit trekked to the west bank of the Missouri near Fort Leavenworth, then a frontier Indian post. At ten years of age he found himself 'the man' of the family, owing to the death of his father, who was killed in the internecine strife that eventuated in the Civil War. At that time he was receiving a man's wages and daring the dangers of a courier between the great freighting wagon trains of Russell, Majors, Waddell & Co. on their trips across the great plains to the settlements of the Rocky Mountains, Salt Lake and the Government forts on the frontier. This was an equally dangerous occupation as any he afterward followed, as the richness of the trains in provisions and valued

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articles of commerce rendered them enticing bait for Indians and bandits, who could best effect their purpose by capturing or killing the couriers. These couriers were practically, to the wagon trains, what the scout was to the army, and as an information bureau what the wireless telegraphy is to their ocean prototypes, the ships of commerce. Then wagon-master, then trapper, hunter, pony-express rider and stage-coach driver, all giving a varied experience in a school, the graduation from which left the scholar an adept in every possible line of frontier lore, and fully equipped to brave and overcome all the obstacles that nature, climate and savage conditions demanded. An exciting experience in the Union army as a soldier and eventually as a confidant and scout of his commanders in the desultory and guerrilla warfare of the Southwest, left him at its finish well known as an all-around frontiersman, competent to advise, to guide and to lead. These qualities soon brought him to the attention of such distinguished commanders as General W. T. Sherman, Lieutenant-General Phil Sheridan, Generals Crook, Custer, Merritt, Carr, Royal, Miles, Dodge and others, and achieved for him the position of chief of scouts. His career in this line identified him with the great fighting epoch between the red man and the white waged by Sheridan after the Civil War that temporarily,

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ended in 1876, but was effectively finished in the Ghost Dance War in the decisive battle of Wounded Knee in the 1890-1891 campaign with the Northern Sioux. Since then his career is well known for the colossal educative exhibition that he brought to the attention of East America and Europe in 1883, and that has been such a valued ethnological, equestrian, military, pioneer and Indian history; of types of men, races and classes, and scenes and incidents that are passing away forever, the people constituting it being the real representatives of their kind and, like himself, belonging to the last, lingering human links of the chain of events that they perpetuate. His work in early life, which brought him fame, has thus been supplemented by, in his later years, a work whose value as a benefit to the public at large will bring him as enduring fame as a great educator."

By permission, from *Encyclopædia Britannica:*

"CODY, WILLIAM FREDERICK, an American frontiersman and scout, was born in Scott County, Iowa, Feb. 26, 1846. His early years were passed on the frontier in the midst of Indian alarms. During the Civil War he rendered service as a Union scout for several commanders. On the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad

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young Cody attached himself to a camp of United States troops protecting the laborers, and won his sobriquet of 'Buffalo Bill' by taking a contract to supply the entire force with fresh buffalo-meat for a certain period, killing, under one contract with the Goddard Brothers, 4,280 buffaloes. Involved in repeated contests with the Indians, he became a noted frontier character, whose coolness and peaceable disposition were only equaled by his bravery in combat. On one occasion he killed the noted Cheyenne chief, Yellow Hand, in the presence of Indians and troops. He became known to juvenile America in the stories of Western adventure written by E. Z. C. Judson ('Ned Buntline'), and, with the advance of civilization, finding his occupation as a scout gone, Cody took for a while to the stage. He left the boards on the slightest Indian alarm, and on one occasion rode to the front in the gaudy trappings of the sensational drama in which he had been appearing. Associating himself with Nate Salsbury, and observing with considerable business instinct the rapid extinction of the frontiersman who won the West, Cody collected a band of Indians, cowboys, rough-riders, unbroken broncos and a small herd of buffaloes and commenced a series of exhibitions in the principal towns and cities of the American continent. His 'Wild West,' as he calls it, rapidly grew in pop-

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ular favor. As recreation for the youth and reminiscence for the elders, he played to huge audiences in almost every town of the Union, and undertook a series of tours through the principal cities of Europe. Here his fame as a scout brought him in contact with the crowned heads of the world, and his trip well sustained his reputation. At the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 he met with considerable success. At this period one of his associates, John M. Burke ('Arizona John'), published a biography of his leader, under the title of *Buffalo Bill, from Prairie to Palace,* while at the same time his first employer, the veteran Alexander Majors, also dealt eulogistically with Cody in a book entitled *Seventy Years on the Frontier.* Eliminating the glare of the footlights and the advertising devices of an aspirant for popular favor, Cody must still be considered as a considerable factor with others in the winning of the West and as a typical instance of the fearless rider of the plains."

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CHAPTER IV

A PONY-EXPRESS RIDER AT FOURTEEN

Pony-Express Rider.

I WAS fourteen when I became a pony-express rider. I had one or two adventures in that pursuit which may prove interesting to read. They were certainly interesting enough to me at the time. The job was worth $125 a month, and meant ceaseless danger.

The importance of the pony-express has, to a certain extent, been lost sight of, but it might be well to impress on the reader the fact of its value at that time in connection with the great trouble occurring shortly after its inception between the two sections of our country—the Civil War of 1861. The difficulties of communicating with the newly acquired empire on the Pacific through the route via Panama or the passage around Cape Horn would have left effective in-

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formation stale, flat, and unprofitable, on account of the time, and the fact that the southwest section was not open for communication to the Union authorities at Washington emphasized its necessity.

The immense territory acquired by us from Mexico was inhabited in 1849 by a very cosmopolitan class of people from all parts of the world, gathered thither in search of gold-dust, including adventurers and intelligent men of ambition, with a strong element of the old Spanish régime still predominating. It is an historical fact that in the then puzzled condition of the different sections of the United States, on account of the lack of communication, it was feared that there would be a general dissolution and two or three independent nations or republics instituted, one of which would be on the Pacific Coast.

The pony-express, by giving the Government facilities for quick communication—quick for those days—was enabled to keep in touch with every movement, and counteract in an effective manner what might have resulted in a separation from us of our grand Pacific possessions.

Its service had been repeatedly suggested to Congress, but after several years of agitation it failed of Government assistance, through the then disunited aims of many congressional leaders, and eventually it was undertaken by Messrs.

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Russell, Majors, Waddell & Co., at their own risk and responsibility, a public-spirited, patriotic action for which they never received proper financial recognition.

This was the great Government freighting firm, under whom I had served as courier between their overland wagon trains. Its object was to cover the vast telegraphic gap between New York and San Francisco, which began at St. Joe, Mo., and ended at Sacramento, Cal., with greater speed—a distance of more than two thousand miles, through a country totally uninhabited, bar savage Indians. At that time it took months for Congressmen and Government officials to reach the Golden Gate or to arrive at Washington, and it took from twenty-two to twenty-five days to send a message from New York to San Francisco across the continent. It had taken stage-coaches three weeks or more to go from the Missouri River to Sacramento. By means of relay stations, 200 in number, employing 600 hardy ponies and from 80 to 100 expert riders, my employers made it possible for despatches and messages, written on tissue paper so as to avoid all unnecessary weight, to be carried that distance on the backs of swift ponies in from eight to ten days. The route chosen is now traversed by the Union Pacific Railroad, in those

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days an almost trackless wilderness, swarming with Indians and highwaymen.

On the 3d of April, 1859, two riders started, one from St. Joe, Mo., and one from Sacramento, Cal. At the start, the despatch-bags would be thrown over a pony's saddle. The rider would mount and ride at top speed to the first relay station. There a fresh pony would be waiting, on whose back the despatch-bags would be hastily thrown. Then off again, and so on till the "relief" rider would snatch the bags and dash off with them for the next lap of the long race. The relays averaged fifteen miles apart. Forty-five to 105 miles semi-weekly each way at full speed over rough country was a rider's daily "stunt." Riders started at 45-mile trips and as they became hardened took the longer trips, which naturally brought them larger pay. This was not an easy job for a fourteen-year-old boy. But I stuck to it in spite of aching bones and a tired head.

For the first three months I had no mishaps. I began to think the talk of danger was all bosh. Then, as I was galloping around a curve on a hillside trail one day, I rode flush up to a leveled pistol. The man behind it told me to throw up my hands. I obeyed. There is no use arguing with a loaded pistol. Frontiersmen in those days shot to kill. The road agent dismounted and

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walked up to me to take my saddle-bags. I tried to look scared and harmless. He lowered his revolver as he reached for the bags. Just then I whirled my pony around. The little horse's plunge knocked the man off his feet, and a stray kick from one of the iron-shod hoofs grazed the fellow's head, knocking him senseless.

Having no further interest in him, I was glad enough to make my escape, and rode in safety in time to the next station.

Here is a further adventure of import:

One day I galloped up to a relay station and found no relief pony waiting for me. Not a soul was in sight. But I heard men yelling and shooting down by the corral, back of the station. I jumped off, rifle in one hand, and my twenty-pound pouches in the other, and made for the trees that hid the corral from the trail. I thought from the noise that there must be an Indian raid there at least.

I reached the little clearing above the corral in time to see a gigantic buffalo-bull charge through a bunch of cattle and rush on toward the door-yard of the station. Four or five men were yelling at the top of their lungs and blazing away at him with guns and revolvers. But if any of the shots reached the brute they only served to madden him all the more. It was no business of mine, so I stood there laughing at their excite-

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ment. But all at once I stopped laughing and turned sick at what I saw.

There, near the door of the cabin, playing with a big wooden doll, sat a little girl, perhaps three years old. She wore a little red cloak, and the bright bit of color had caught the mad buffalo's attention. Down at the unconscious playing baby charged the great, furious brute. The men saw her peril just when I did, and they fired wildly and came forward at a dead run. But they were too far away.

A woman ran screaming out of the house and rushed toward the child. She had no weapon of any kind, and probably couldn't have used one if she had. But, I suppose, mother-love made her forget the horrible peril and she wanted to die with her little girl. Women are sometimes braver, I think, than men, especially where their children are concerned.

The buffalo was not fifteen yards away from the child when I brought my rifle instinctively to my shoulder. I wouldn't give myself time to think what must happen if I should miss. It was one of those times when a man must not fail in his aim.

Just then the baby looked up and saw the murderous brute. She clapped both hands and gave a squeal of delight. She probably thought the beast was some new sort of playmate.

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As she called out, I fired!

The buffalo's legs seemed to tuck themselves up under him. The impetus of his rush carried him along the ground full ten feet, and he came to a stop with his head not six inches from the little girl's knee, stone-dead.

Then, after the men had pounded me on the back till I was sore, the child's mother insisted on kissing me. How a healthy fourteen-year-old boy does loathe to be kissed!

Although among the youngest of the couriers, I seemed to have filled the bill and was promoted (as was Johnny Fry) to $150 per month—but to a more dangerous route.

My age at the time of riding the pony-express will naturally create attention, and possibly surprise, from the readers of the present day, as the youth at that age in the West—from fourteen to sixteen—was in many respects a man from the time he could shoulder a rifle or fire a pistol—with all a man's responsibility, bar voting. Of course, I suppose in the centers of manufacture, indoor work, or in mines, it is necessary to protect children under the Child Labor Law; but the conditions were such on the frontier that the boy acquired an early experience, and both the Indian boys and the white boys, at the age of fourteen or fifteen, were ranked in every way as

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factors to be accounted for on any occasions that arose demanding energy, stamina and pluck.

Hundreds of other boys at that time were in the same class as myself, ready, willing, and able to do and dare—little men.

The importance to the white man of quick communication soon dawned on the Indians and aroused them to special endeavors to harass, intercept, and kill off the messengers in charge of this work. Consequently, after the first few weeks, pony-express riding became probably one of the most dangerous occupations known in the world's history, and my new route was *the limit.*

The reader can imagine that it was lonely; it demanded endurance above the ordinary to defy the summer's heat and winter's snow storms and blizzards; skill in crossing temporary bridges and dangerous streams, with shifting fords and treacherous quicksands, which had to be often got over at night; sometimes swollen torrents, and horses and riders had to swim, momentarily liable to ambush by the ever-alert savages—then the monarchs of the prairies. The reader will understand that the Indian was master of all the country outside the rifle-range of station or fort. This gave to the very atmosphere a sense of continual peril, making possible a death so horrible that its possibility was as trying to the imagination as

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capture made its decree a certainty, with all the horrors of torture.

That many riders met this fateful end is history, while other escapes were simply miraculous. Those who came out alive on the arrival at a station often found that one of the riders had fallen a victim to the savage foe, and had to take up his burden, and in such cases he had to pound the saddle over the stiff country for another hundred miles. The fact that the dead body was often somewhere along the trail, of course did not add pleasant thoughts to the journey. Nothing but a quick perception and rapidity of action —and, seemingly, intuitive knowledge when danger threatened—and the angel of good luck assisted me to escape many a close call. Several times I had bullets through my buckskins, twice through my saddle, and on one occasion my sturdy mount received a bad flesh wound. On two occasions my good marksmanship saved me at the expense of the roster of the Sioux braves by sending two at different times to their happy hunting grounds. On several occasions I had to resume the route of slaughtered couriers, notably on one occasion, which stands as possibly a record in the story of this dangerous duty. While riding between the Red Buttes of the Platte and the Three Crossings of the Sweetwater, I had what was considered a most difficult and lonely

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CHIEF IRON TAIL, NOW WITH BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST

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route. On reaching Three Crossings I found the rider of the next division had been killed the night before, which necessitated my covering his route, and, on arrival there, the rider who should have been on hand had not turned up, having been killed, as was afterward ascertained, so I was compelled to ride the two routes without stop, except for meals and change of horses, successfully making the journey (or round trip) without sleep, only stopping to change horses and snatch a hasty meal. This ride created a sensation, so I will quote from an authority best able to place it on record as an historical fact, namely, Alexander Majors himself, in his book of *Seventy Years on the Frontier:*

"Among the most noted and daring riders of the pony-express was Hon. William F. Cody, better known as 'Buffalo Bill,' whose reputation is now established the world over. While engaged in the express service, his route lay between Red Buttes and Three Crossings. It was a most dangerous, long, and lonely trail, including perilous crossings of swollen and turbulent streams. An average of fifteen miles an hour had to be made, including change of horses, detours for safety, and time for meals. Once, upon reaching Three Crossings, he found that the rider on the next division had been killed during the night before, and he was called on to make the

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extra trip until another rider could be procured. This was a request the compliance with which would involve the most taxing labors, and an endurance few persons are capable of; nevertheless, young Cody was promptly on hand for the additional journey, and reached Rocky Ridge, the limit of the second route, on time. This round trip, of 321 miles, was made without a stop, except for meals and to change horses, and every station on the route was entered on time. This is one of the longest and best ridden pony-express journeys ever made, the entire distance (321 miles) being covered in 21 hours and 30 minutes."

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CHAPTER V

HUNTING FOR BEAR AND FINDING HORSE THIEVES

I HAVE often been asked for stories about the "bad men" of the West in the early days. Later on in this series I shall have more perhaps to say about them. I am going to tell now of my first "run-in" with the worst kind of white men that then infested the frontier. These were horse thieves. And horse-stealing in those days was a crime that came close in ranking with cold-blooded murder.

Sometimes a horse thief was a discharged teamster, sometimes a loafer, sometimes a professional "bad man," who chose this easy way of making plenty of money. These men once in a while worked singly, but oftener in bands large enough to herd and drive a large bunch of stolen horses.

Once I wanted a big grizzly bear skin; or, rather, one of my sisters wanted it for a rug. I

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had promised, as soon as I should have time, to get her one. For even in those times a big grizzly could not be shot in one's dooryard. It meant a long trip through the hills, and more than a little danger.

A light snow had fallen, and I started on horseback for the hills beyond Horseshoe Station. I ran across plenty of antelope tracks, but not a trace did I get of bear until after one o'clock that afternoon. Then I came upon the trail of one. It looked as if a giant had been walking through the snow on all-fours. My horse snorted and fidgeted. From that I knew Bruin was not far off. I was about to dismount when my horse plunged violently. There, not eighty feet away, stood a grizzly!

As I looked, he reared himself on his hind legs. He seemed to stand as high as a mountain. It is unusual for a bear to turn on his pursuers at that distance. I suppose something had happened to make him angry. For there he was. He had evidently just come out of the bushes.

I aimed as well as I could, and by good luck I planted the first shot in the right place. Down came the bear. Before going closer, I sent in two more bullets; for a still bear isn't always a dead bear. Then I skinned Bruin and strapped his pelt on my excited horse's back, just behind the saddle.

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I started back, but the going was bad. By sunset I saw I couldn't hope to get back to camp that night. So I looked about for a good, sheltered spot to camp. Just then my horse whinnied. His call was answered from a hollow just behind the creek-bed along which I was riding. I dismounted, fastened him, and, rifle in hand, went on to investigate.

There, hidden in a little gulch, were about twenty horses. They weren't guarded. Looking around in the dusk, I saw a dug-out, about a hundred yards up the hill. Lights appeared through the cracks. I clambered up to learn who was there.

I knocked at the blanket door. The voices I had heard as I climbed the slope were hushed all at once. Then I heard a half-dozen sharp clicks. That meant the cocking of rifles or revolvers. I began to wonder what company I had stumbled into. Before I could move back, some one called:

"Who's there?"

"A friend and a white man," I replied.

The door opened, and a big, ugly-looking fellow stepped forth and said:

"Come in."

I accepted the invitation with some degree of fear and hesitation, which I endeavored to conceal, as I thought it was too late to back out,

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and that it would never do to weaken at that point, whether they were friends or foes. Upon entering the dugout my eyes fell upon eight as rough and villainous looking men as I ever saw in my life. Two of them I instantly recognized as teamsters who had been driving in Lew Simpson's train, a few months before, and had been discharged.

They were charged with the murdering and robbing of a ranchman; and, having stolen his horses, it was supposed that they had left the country. I gave them no signs of recognition, however, deeming it advisable to let them remain in ignorance as to who I was. It was a hard crowd, and I concluded the sooner I could get away from them the better it would be for me. I felt confident that they were a band of horse thieves.

"Where are you going, kid, and who's with you?" asked one of the men, who appeared to be the leader of the gang.

"I am entirely alone. I left Horseshoe Station this morning for a bear hunt, and not finding any bears I had determined to camp out for the night and wait till morning," said I; "and just as I was going into camp a few hundred yards down the creek, I heard one of your horses whinnying, and then I came to your camp."

I thus was explicit in my statement, in order,

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if possible, to satisfy the cut-throats that I was not spying upon them, but that my intrusion was entirely accidental.

"Where's your horse?" demanded the boss thief.

"I left him down at the creek," I answered.

They proposed going after the horse, but I thought that would never do, as it would leave me without any means of escape, and I accordingly said, in hopes to throw them off the track, "Captain, I'll leave my gun here and go down and get my horse, and come back and stay all night."

I said this in as cheerful and as careless a manner as possible, so as not to arouse their suspicions in any way or lead them to think that I was aware of their true character. I hated to part with my gun, but my suggestion of leaving it was a part of the plan of escape which I had arranged. If they have the gun, thought I, they will surely believe that I intend to come back. But this little game did not work at all, as one of the desperadoes spoke up and said:

"Jim and I will go down with you after your horse, and you can leave your gun here all the same, as you'll not need it."

"All right," I replied, for I could certainly have done nothing else. It became evident to me that it would be better to trust myself with two men than with the whole party. It was ap-

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parent from this time on I would have to be on the alert for some good opportunity to give them the slip.

"Come along," said one of them, and together we went down the creek, and soon came to the spot where my horse was tied. One of the men unhitched the animal, and said: "I'll lead the horse."

"Very well," said I; "I've got a couple of sage hens here. Lead on."

I picked up the sage hens which I had killed a few hours before, and followed the man who was leading the horse, while his companion brought up the rear. The nearer we approached the dugout, the more I dreaded the idea of going back among the villainous cut-throats. My first plan of escape having failed, I now determined upon another. I had both of my revolvers with me, the thieves not having thought it necessary to search me. It was now quite dark, and I purposely dropped one of the sage hens, and asked the man behind me to pick it up. While he was hunting for it on the ground, I quickly pulled out one of my Colt's revolvers and struck him a tremendous blow on the back of the head, knocking him senseless to the ground. I then instantly wheeled around and saw that the man ahead, who was only a few feet distant, had heard the blow and had turned to see what was the matter,

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BLUE SHIELD, SIOUX CHIEF.

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his hand upon his revolver. We faced each other at about the same instant, but before he could fire, as he tried to do, I shot him dead in his tracks. Then jumping on my horse, I rode down the creek as fast as possible, through the darkness and over the rough ground and rocks.

The other outlaws in the dugout, having heard the shot which I had fired, knew there was trouble, and they all came rushing down the creek. I suppose by the time they reached the man whom I had knocked down, that he had recovered and hurriedly told them of what had happened. They did not stay with the man whom I had shot, but came on in hot pursuit of me. They were not mounted, and were making better time down the rough mountain than I was on horseback. From time to time I heard them gradually gaining on me.

At last they came so near that I saw that I must abandon my horse. I jumped to the ground, and gave him a hard slap with the butt of one of my revolvers, which started him on down the valley, while I scrambled up the mountain side. I had not ascended more than forty feet when I heard my pursuers coming closer and closer; I quickly hid behind a large pine tree, and in a few moments they all rushed by me, being led on by the rattling footsteps of my horse, which they heard ahead of them. Soon they be-

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gan firing in the direction of the horse, as they no doubt supposed I was still seated on his back. As soon as they had passed me I climbed further up the steep mountain, and knowing that I had given them the slip, and feeling certain I could keep out of their way, I at once struck out for Horseshoe Station, which was twenty-five miles distant. I had very hard traveling at first, but upon reaching lower and better ground I made good headway, walking all night and getting into the station just before daylight—footsore, weary, and generally played out.

I immediately waked up the men of the station and told them of my adventure. Slade himself happened to be there, and he at once organized a party to go out in pursuit of the horse thieves. Shortly after daylight twenty well armed stage drivers, stock tenders, and ranchmen were galloping in the direction of the dugout. Of course I went along with the party, notwithstanding that I was very tired and had had hardly time for any rest at all. We had a brisk ride, and arrived in the immediate vicinity of the thieves' rendezvous at about ten o'clock in the morning. We approached the dugout cautiously, but upon getting in close proximity to it we could discover no horses in sight. No one was inside, and the general appearance of everything indicated that

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the place had been deserted—that the birds had flown. Such, indeed, proved to be the case.

We found a new-made grave, where they had evidently buried the man whom I had shot. We made a thorough search of the whole vicinity, and finally found their trail going southeast in the direction of Denver. As it would have been useless to follow them, we rode back to the station, and thus ended my eventful bear-hunt. We had no trouble for some time after that.

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CHAPTER VI

ADVENTURES AS A CIVIL WAR SCOUT

William F. Cody.

WHEN the Civil War broke out there were many of us in Kansas with old grudges to settle. I for one remembered my father's sufferings at the hands of the Pro-Slavery Party, and I was eager to enlist. But for the first two years my mother refused her consent, as I was the main support of the family. It was not until early in 1864, when I was eighteen, that I was able to join the Union army.

I enlisted at Fort Leavenworth in the Seventh Kansas (known as "Jennison's Jayhawkers") Regiment, and we were sent to Memphis, Tenn., to General A. J. Smith's army. The Confederate General Forrest, with his army, was camped only a few miles away.

I had expected to lead the life and fight the fights of the average soldier. In which case my

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war adventures would have no place in this series. But there was different work in store for me. General Smith happened to have heard of my work on the plains. I hadn't been in camp three days when he sent for me.

I thought a General in talking to a newly joined private would put on a lordly air. But Smith didn't. He talked quietly, and in a rather friendly fashion, explaining to me that it was necessary he should learn more about the Confederate position, numbers, plans and armament. In other words, that I was to risk hanging by going into Forrest's camp in civilian clothes and pick up what information I could.

I knew what this meant. If I were caught I should be hanged. It was a risk no man cares to take. To be shot or cut down in a cavalry charge is one thing; to die by hanging is quite another. But it was service for the Union. So I accepted the mission.

While I was still in the General's tent a Confederate spy who had just been captured was brought in. I recognized the fellow as a Kansan I'd known as a boy. As soon as he had been examined and taken away to the guard-house I pointed to the Union plans and maps that had been taken from him. An idea had come to me.

"If you'll change those so as to make their information useless, sir," said I, "I can win my-

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self a welcome from Forrest by carrying them to him."

I put on my civilian clothes and rode straight to the Confederate camp. The pickets held me up. I said I had private information for General Forrest. I was passed from man to man till at last I found myself in the great cavalry leader's tent.

Forrest was the sort of man who didn't impress one as being especially gentle or easy to fool. I saw I'd need all the wits Heaven had given me, and that if I failed to convince the General I could expect little mercy. But the game must be played as the cards lay. It was too late now to turn back.

I told him the Kansas spy was a chum of mine and had entrusted some maps and plans to me, because he still had work to do within the Union lines. As I spoke I handed Forrest the altered documents Smith had given me. Forrest eyed me sharply.

"Why did you consent to bring these to me?" he asked.

"Well, sir," I stammered bashfully, "I thought maybe if I did you the favor you'd give me a job in your scout service. I'm a plainsman and used to scouting."

He cross-examined me, asking all sorts of questions. At last I could see he was satisfied

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that I was all right. He packed me off to the scouts' quarters and promised to give me a chance as soon as one should arise.

That was what I wanted. I used the next three days to good advantage and picked up all the information Smith needed. Then I began to grow restless. I was ready for Forrest to send me on some mission so that I could get back to Smith as soon as I was clear of the Confederate lines.

But he didn't seem in a hurry to make use of my services. I figured that I'd have to steal secretly out of camp if I was to go at all. This is harder than it sounds, in war-time. The matter, however, was settled for me very suddenly, and without any act of mine.

On the fourth morning, as I was loafing idly about, I saw a man go into Forrest's tent. As he entered I recognized him. It was the Kansas spy. He had evidently escaped and had just returned to report to Forrest. All of a sudden my neck-kerchief began to feel as if it was a rope. My game was up. In five minutes, at most, Forrest would know.

I got to my horse, saddled him, and rode carelessly toward the outposts, twirling in one hand a letter at whose address I kept looking now and then. The trick served well. No one stopped me until I was close to the outer picket lines.

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Then I heard a pounding of hoofs, a yell and a shot. Behind came a dozen horsemen. They were after me. It was a case of *ride!* And I rode.

I dropped, Indian fashion, over my galloping horse's mane, and a picket's shot grazed my shoulder. A little storm of bullets from the riders spattered all around me. Off flew my hat, punctured. One of my stirrups was clipped by another ball. My horse was slightly wounded, too. A Confederate scout flashed into sight before me. We both fired. His horse reared and fell. And I passed on.

It was a hot race while it lasted, and only ended when I burst through a strip of woods into the very arms of a company of Union skirmishers.

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CHAPTER VII

"WILD BILL" AND HOW HE KILLED TEN "BAD MEN"

"Wild Bill" Hickok.

AT THIS time in my career I formed many acquaintances among the younger men of the plains, who afterward achieved distinction, and who, as youths, had shown their possession of sturdy qualities that evoked recognition and admiration. Many were disappointed afterward; some became distinctive celebrities, useful in some particular line of work which the peculiar conditions existing on the frontier created. Many a young comrade gave up his life and passed to the Great Divide early in the game, while others survived through ordeals of the most trying nature, in actual peril and thrilling episodes, some of which are almost beyond belief.

Among one of my earliest acquaintances was a young man, older than myself, who was destined

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to become famed in frontier history, while at the same time legendary gossip has caused his career to be somewhat misunderstood, owing to its varied character. This was James B. Hickok, who, although his name was James, will live in song and story as "Wild Bill." This name was attached to him through a misunderstanding, or a case of mistaken identity. His elder brother, William, or "Bill" Hickok, had for years been a celebrated plainsman, and famed, especially, as one of the best wagon-masters who took charge of the great Government trains, with all their responsibilities. He consequently had become famous for courage, ability to command men, defend the interests of his employers, stand off the Indians and bandits that preyed upon the wagon trains, and command the dare-devil spirits that were often the component parts of the outfit. In fact, the wagon-master was on the plains with immensely valuable freight and cargoes crossing to the Pacific Coast; he held a position similar to that of the captain of a ship on the ocean. The assistant wagon-masters were, like the first, second and third officers, absolute in power, out of range of the law's protection on just as vast a sea of prairie as the ocean's bosom; they had to show the nerve to command obedience and instil fear to carry through the enterprise safely. William Hickok, in achieving this enviable position, was

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known to a limited circle as "Wild Bill Hickok" when he went on a round-up of discontented men or bandits. Young James rose rapidly and became involved in so many "little affairs of a personal character," in which he invariably "got his man," that rumor identified his actions with the person of the elder William, and he became branded with the cognomen "Wild Bill Hickok." The elder brother acquired a competency and retired to a farm near Mendota, Ill.; the younger brother became at last one of the most noted of plainsmen. Plainsmen at that time were unique characters, especially those born on the borders, or joining at a time of impressionable youth, and were the creation of the peculiar conditions which obtained in the rough-hewing of the nation, and reared in the necessities and arduous duties of the early West.

The young men of to-day know little of him for what he has done in the early days, as the changing conditions have brought about a state of things which has removed the necessity for his existence; he belongs to history only, and the stories of his exploits are all that remain to remind the rising generation of the early trials and hardships of the old pioneer life. Conditions are now so thoroughly altered as to be almost inconceivable at the present time, and the stories of the old days savor to the present generation more

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of romance and fancy than of fact. As in all lines of human endeavor, among minor characters, mediocre and otherwise, a few stand out who might be called "the great ones." Without reflecting upon the great army of nation builders who have wrought wonders in the western portion of the country and led the band of pioneers, there are some who made them almost specialists. In this respect, "Wild Bill" will stand unique as a man, not without some faults as judged by the Sunday-school standard, but whose rough nature in fight showed a defiance of danger or death almost of a demon kind, so that it might be said that he was not only a most fitting man for the occasion, but the personification, in many localities, of the first rude enforcement of law and order. While probably no man in western history had so many notches on his gun, it may be said that no man recorded them oftener in defending right, enforcing law, and dealing justice. Our friendship in boyhood causes me, therefore, to allude to him, in this early stage of my reminiscences, as an interlude in my own personal story, of one, while verging somewhat on different lines, with whom I was closely identified.

In our early youth we were, incidentally, associated in many adventures on the plains in Indian warfare, wagon-trailing, hunting and trapping, and we happened to be on the same side of

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the fence when the Civil War between the North and the South left the plains almost alone to the red man. The freighters, generally, separated and took sides with either the Union or the Confederate forces, raising independent commissions and bands that made a peculiar chapter in the history of the Southwest in what was and will be forever a bloody page known as guerrilla warfare. Inured to hardships and dangers, and well equipped for war, stratagem and spoils, the spirit of partisanship ran so feverishly strong, so bitterly vindictive, as to cause them to exceed, in their loyalty to one party or the other, the strict rules of war—in fact, at times to ignore the attributes of civilized contests and to partake of the nature of the savage.

For instance, Quantrell and his famed rangers were important factors in the desultory story on one side, and the command to which I had the honor to belong, and of which I feel proud, known as the "Kansas Jayhawkers" and Red Leg Scouts, at times also showed a fervency in their cause that would not meet with the approbation of the commission at The Hague.

"Wild Bill" soon became one of the most noted men in the confidence of the Union generals in the extreme Southwest, the country being familiar to him, and, as his ancestors had come from New England and he was born in Illinois, he

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had embodied an intense feeling for that side of the struggle. Six foot two, broad-chested, measuring fifty inches around, with a waist that you could almost span, a foot like a woman, long, blond hair which glistened like gold in the sunlight, and with muscles equaling any trained athlete or prizefighter, he was a magnificent specimen of manhood and one of the most deadly shots with rifle or pistol that ever lived. Moreover, he was an expert horseman, with nerves like steel, and a heart as brave as the proverbial lion; he seemed, therefore, especially fitted to his job. In his enthusiasm as a Union spy, he made a detour around, down into Texas and back to Southwest Missouri, and joined the Texans under an assumed name and accepted service as a Confederate spy, consequently giving himself the double danger of a spy's fate. Therefore, by this means, he became of immense service to the Union forces.

For many months he was confidential secret-service agent for the Confederate forces under General Price in an invasion of Kansas, and in one battle, while among their advance-guard, he saw a maneuver of which he thought the Union General should be informed. He therefore made a dash from the rebel to the opposing lines. His action was so sudden that the Southerners thought his horse had become unruly. The au-

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dacity of his movements did not dawn on them for a few moments, when, with yells, a squad took up hot pursuit. Both armies watched in breathless suspense, but, always famed for picking superior mounts, he quickly distanced all save one, who followed close up behind him, firing several shots which whistled close to his ear. Just when Hickok's horse was compelled to vault a small creek he turned in his saddle, and, with his unerring aim, dropped the gallant pursuer from his horse and rode safely into the Union lines. Here he delivered his information to General Pleasanton, which turned the tide of the day. He was captured, however, a short time after and condemned to death. A regiment of Union cavalry was prowling on the outskirts of the rebel army, with special orders to rescue him if possible; and at daylight an impromptu obituary service was said in his memory, as he was a great favorite with the men. At this juncture, the videttes announced a strange movement in front, where a Confederate officer in complete uniform was seen dashing madly toward the Union command, and half a mile behind, following, a squad of cavalry. It turned out to be "Wild Bill," who had quietly succeeded in getting a strangle hold on the guard, and, with his powerful grip, had choked him to death and taken his place on guard. He called for the officer of the day, who suffered the same

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fate. He then took the officer's coat and equipment, and "nailing" the first horse, he leisurely rode out of camp and was received with a grand ovation when he was recognized as he rode up to his old command, who had given him up for "a goner." The memorable affairs in which he was engaged during the war were the cause of many others after its close—friends, relatives and acquaintances all wanting revenge.

It was such a legacy that he fell heir to that necessitated the famous duel with Captain Dave Tutt, which was fought in the presence of the citizens of Springfield, Mo., with the judges and grand jury on the court-house steps, and the windows on the public square closed. At the first exchange of shots, Hickok's left ear was slightly creased, and Captain Tutt fell dead, shot through the heart.

In Abilene, Kan., when he was marshal—his predecessor having been taken by the "bad men," who placed his head on the block and chopped it off like a chicken—he restored law and order in a personal fight, killing four men. At the opening up of many towns he was secured as marshal, and the better classes depended solely upon him for protection. This threw considerable responsibility upon his shoulders, as he really became judge, jury and executioner. His career was filled with these episodes and with others which grew out

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of his successes, but probably the most noted event in his career was his single-handed fight with Jacob McCandles and his gang of nine men, at Rock Creek, Western Kansas, while riding pony-express in 1861. This was his first great fight, while covering his route, armed only with two Colt's revolvers. He halted at Rock Creek station to find the stock-tender dead and his wife excited by his presence. As he approached, she exclaimed:

"My heavens, Bill, McCandles and his gang are in the neighborhood, or were so this morning!"

This gang of bandits had been laying a trap for Hickok to get him out of the way. Rushing to the door to remount and get back, he saw several heads pop up out of the grass, and a bullet struck the door-jamb. Jumping back and telling the lady to escape, he was fortunate to find a loaded rifle left by the husband, and which the McCandles gang did not think of, as they saw that Bill was only armed with six-shooters. There was some raillery and badinage between him and McCandles of a defiant nature, when McCandles and nine bandits rose and, with a yell, charged for the door. They depended on taking the chance of losing some of their men and made a quick charge. Bill's instructions were to me in such cases: "Will, always get the

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leader." This he did, as he fired straight at McCandles, the bullet catching him full in the heart, and he dropped instantly. By this time the desperadoes were close upon the cabin. Jumping aside, he emptied the revolvers through the cabin door. Four men fell dead, besides McCandles, at this stage of the game. Although wounded with buckshot and bullet, and struck over the head with a rifle, that caused him to bleed at the mouth and nose, he still "stayed with 'em." At this time, as he told me himself, the cabin was filled with smoke, and anything he struck or hit was an enemy, and, in the gloom, probably they assisted him in their own destruction; but with his faithful bowie knife he never faltered until all was quiet, calm and still, for he had struck savage blows, following the devils up one side of the room and down the other and into corners, striking and yelling until he felt sure that every one was down.

All of a sudden it seemed as if his heart was on fire. Bleeding from everywhere, he felt around the walls to steady himself to the door and then rushed out to the well and drank from the bucket, that had been freshly drawn on his arrival, and fell into a momentary faint. When he came to, one of the wounded men had crawled to the well for the same purpose, and Bill assist-

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ed him to get a drink of water, when the man gasped and fell dead.

Hickok was wounded by three bullets, eleven buckshot, and was cut in thirteen places. It was six months before "Wild Bill" fully recovered from the results of what was one of the most thrilling exploits in border story—one that is not created by the romancer, but is well authenticated—that "Wild Bill" in single-handed conflict killed ten men—men of the most desperate character.

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CHAPTER VIII

MY FIRST MEETING WITH GENERAL WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN

General Sherman.

In the fall of 1865, General Sherman and the Indian Commissioners, who were to make a treaty with the Arapahoes and Comanches in southwestern Kansas, came to Fort Zarrah, on the Arkansas River. From there they were to go to what was known as Council Springs, a distance of sixty-five miles from Zarrah. Between Zarrah and the Springs is a flat level country, but no water is to be had. Consequently, there was no water carried, save for drinking purposes, which was carried in canteens in the ambulances, for the General's orders were that he would leave Fort Zarrah at two a. m., so as to get a good start over this dry country.

Our chief of scouts and guide at that time was

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Dick Curtis. The outfit was composed of three ambulances, with saddle-horses for the General and the Indian Commissioners, and when the General and Commissioners were riding in the ambulances, their saddle-horses were led by orderlies. The General had three or four staff officers, a company of cavalry as an escort, and about thirty scouts and messengers well mounted. These scouts' and messengers' duty was that whenever the General wished to send any quick despatches back to Fort Riley, at that time the nearest telegraph point, these men were to carry them. I was at the time a young scout employed for this purpose.

It was about two o'clock in the afternoon, after leaving the fort, that a young officer, one of the General's aides, was riding along talking to me and asking me about when I thought we were going to get to Council Springs, where the Indians were. I told him that if we kept on in the direction we were then going we would never get there.

He asked, "Why so?" I replied that we were not going in the direction of the Springs—that we were bearing too far to the west.

He said, "Why don't you tell the General this? He is up there in the ambulance." I told him (the officer) that I was not guiding General Sherman, that Mr. Curtis was the guide, and that

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I had no right to interfere with him whatever. Nor did I intend to do so. This young officer (I have forgotten his name) tumbled to the situation, and, galloping ahead, he rode alongside the ambulance and told the General what I had said, and explained to him my reasons for not mentioning the situation. The General appreciated it at once and called a halt, climbed out of the ambulance, sent for Mr. Curtis to come back to him, and also for the scouts to come up, of which I was one. He laid out a large map on the ground, and, when we all got near him, he said to Mr. Curtis:

"I wish you would show me on this map just where we are."

Mr. Curtis told him, which was perfectly true, that the maps were all so incorrect that it was impossible to go by them.

The General remarked, "Well, then, Mr. Curtis, how far are we from the Springs? From the distance we have traveled since leaving Zarrah, at two o'clock this morning, we should be very near them."

Mr. Curtis replied, "General, this is a very level country, as you can see. There are no landmarks, and there are so many thousands of buffalo all over the prairie that it is pretty hard to tell just where we are and how far we are from the Springs. Furthermore, I have not been over

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to the Springs for several years, and when I last went there I was with a large body of Indians, and was not acting as guide. Consequently, I feel that I am rather lost myself."

The General, looking at the other scouts, said: "Do any of you know where the Springs are?" The young officer had pointed me out to the General, and he was looking straight at me when he asked this question.

I said: "Yes, General, I know where the Springs are."

"How far are we from them?" asked the General. I told him about eighteen miles.

He asked in what direction, and I answered, saying they were due south from us now, and we were headed dead west. Dick Curtis spoke up and said: "Billy, when were you ever out to the Springs?"

I told him I had been there on two or three different occasions with Charlie Rath, the Indian trader, and had killed many buffalo all over this country. The General called for his horse, mounted it and said: "Young man, you come and show me the Springs. I will ride with you. Mr. Curtis, come along! No disrespect to you, sir. I appreciate how hard it is for one to find his way in a country where there are no landmarks, level as the sea, and covered with buffalo."

I headed due south, the General riding by my

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side, and during this ride the General asked me many questions—how I came to know this country so well, etc. I told him that my father had been killed in the border ruffian war of bleeding Kansas, and that since his death I had grown up on the plains with the freighters, trappers, buffalo hunters, Indian traders and others, and I was quite familiar with all the country lying between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains. We rode on in this way until, approaching a little rise in the prairie, I said: "General, when you get to that small ridge up there, you will look down into a low depression of the prairie and see Council Springs and the Indians." The Springs rise in this vast plain, and they only run for about four or five miles, when it becomes a small stream of water sinking into the sand. When we gained this ridge, there before the General's eyes were hundreds and hundreds of horses and a large Indian village.

I said: "There you are, General; there are your Indians, camped around the Springs." He patted me on the back in a fatherly way and said: "My boy, I am going to know you better."

The General and the Peace Commissioners counciled here for three days, and in the evening of the third day an orderly came to me and told me the General wished me to report to him at

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his tent. The General kindly invited me in and said: "Billy, I want to go from here now to Fort Kearny on the Platte River, in Nebraska. How far is it?" I told him the way that he would have to go to have good camping-places, and that it would be about three hundred miles. He asked: "Can you guide me there?" I told him I could, and he said: "All right. We will start to-morrow for Fort Zarrah, and from there to Fort Riley, and from Fort Riley I want you to guide me to Fort Kearny." Which I did; and on arriving at Fort Kearny the General complimented me, and said: "From here I am going to Fort Leavenworth. I wish you to guide me there." I told him that would be easy, for there was a big wagon road from Kearny to Fort Leavenworth. He said: "That is all right. It will make it easier for you. You have guided me safely for over three hundred miles where there were no wagon roads, and I am not afraid to trust myself with you on a big wagon road." On arriving at Leavenworth, I parted with the General, and he said General Sheridan was coming out to take command in a short time, and that he would tell him of me. This was the last time I saw the dear old General for several years. He was one of the loveliest men I have ever had the pleasure of knowing.

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From an Old Commander

"Fifth Avenue Hotel,
"New York, June 29, 1887.

"Hon. Wm. F. Cody, London, England.

"Dear Cody—In common with all your countrymen, I want to let you know that I am not only gratified, but proud of your management and general behavior; so far as I can make out you have been modest, graceful, and dignified in all you have done to illustrate the history of civilization on this continent during the past century.

"I am especially pleased with the graceful and pretty compliment paid you by the Princess of Wales, who rode in the Deadwood Coach while it was attacked by the Indians and rescued by the cowboys. Such things did occur in our days, and may never again.

"As near as I can estimate, there were in 1865 about nine and a half million of buffaloes on the plains between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains; all are now gone—killed for their meat, their skins and bones.

"This seems like desecration, cruelty, and murder, yet they have been replaced by twice as many *neat* cattle. At that date there were about 165,000 Pawnees, Sioux, Cheyennes, Kiowas and Arapahoes, who depended on these buffaloes for

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their yearly food. They, too, are gone, and have been replaced by twice or thrice as many white men and women, who have made the earth to blossom as the rose, and who can be counted, taxed and governed by the laws of nature and civilization. This change has been salutary, and will go on to the end. You have caught one epoch of the world's history; have illustrated it in the very heart of the modern world—London —and I want you to feel that on this side the water we appreciate it. This drama must end; days, years and centuries follow fast; even the drama of civilization must have an end.

"All I aim to accomplish on this sheet of paper is to assure you that I fully recognize your work, and that the presence of the Queen, the beautiful Princess of Wales, the Prince and British public, are marks of favor which reflect back on America sparks of light which illuminate many a house and cabin in the land where once you guided me honestly and faithfully, in 1865-6, from Fort Riley to Kearny, in Kansas and Nebraska. Sincerely your friend,

"W. T. SHERMAN."

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CHAPTER IX

HUNTING BUFFALO TO FEED THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD CONSTRUCTORS

ONE of my favorite buffalo-hunting horses was a small roan or large Indian pony which I got from a Ute Indian. As this horse came from Utah I named him "Brigham," after the prophet. During the construction of the Kansas Pacific Railroad (now the Union Pacific), in 1867, the construction of the end of the track got into the great buffalo country, and at that time the Indians—the Sioux, Cheyennes, Comanches, and Arapahoes—were all on the war-path. It was before the refrigerator car was in use and the contractors had no fresh meat to feed their employés. The men were grumbling considerably for fresh meat, for they could see fresh meat—that is, the buffalo, deer and antelope—in every direction, and they would growl because the con-

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tractors did not kill the buffaloes so that they could have fresh meat to eat. This was a little more difficult job than they thought, as the Indians were contesting every mile of railroad that was being built into their country. Besides having military escorts to guard the graders, every man from the boss down who went to work on the grading of the road carried a rifle with him as well as a pick and shovel, and when he was using them his gun lay on the ground near him, as the Indians would daily attack them.

The construction of that road, in 1867, was nearly a continuous fight, and it was dangerous for a man to venture any distance away from the troops and the graders to hunt the buffalo. They tried several hunters who claimed that they could kill buffalo and bring it into camp so that they could have fresh meat for their men. One or two of these men were killed by Indians while doing so, and the others gave up the job.

At that time I was guide and scout at Fort Hays, Kansas, and had quite a reputation as a buffalo hunter. Some one told the main contractor that if he could get me I would be able to kill all the buffalo he would require. He came to Fort Hays to see me. Of course I could not accept—although he made me a very tempting financial offer—without permission of the Mili-

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tary Department Commander, General Sheridan.

The subject was even discussed at Headquarters in Washington, and, after considerable delay, evidence was presented that it would solve one of the main labor problems in the great work of constructing the great trans-continental railroad and facilitate matters greatly. Leave of absence for the purpose was given me, with the understanding that in case of an important outbreak I should resume the duties of my position. As roving Indians generally followed the herds of buffalo, I was really in a certain sense performing scouting duty also.

I started in killing buffalo for the Union Pacific Railroad. I had a wagon with four mules, one driver and two butchers, all brave, well-armed men, myself riding my horse Brigham. We would leave the end of the construction work to go out after buffalo, and had an understanding with the commanding officer who had charge of the troops guarding the construction, that should a smoke signal be seen in the direction in which I had gone, they would know I was in trouble and would send mounted men to my assistance.

I had to keep a close and careful lookout for Indians before making my run into a herd of buffalo. It was my custom in those days to pick out a herd that seemed to have the fattest cows

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and young heifers. I would then rush my horse into them, picking out the fattest ones and shooting them down, while my horse would be running alongside of them. I had a happy faculty in knowing how to shoot down the leaders and get the herd to run in a circle. I have killed from twenty-five to forty buffalo while the herd was circling, and they would all be dropped very close together; that is to say, in a space covering about five acres. When I had the number I wanted, I would stop shooting and allow the balance of the herd to get away. The wagon would drive up and my men would instantly begin to secure the hams, the tenderloins, the tongues, and the choicest meat of each buffalo, including the heads, which were afterward mounted and used for an advertisement for the said road, loading the wagon until it was full. We would then drive back to our camp, or to the end of the track where the men were at work, and when the men would see me coming with a load of fresh meat they would say: "Ah, here comes Bill with a lot of nice buffalo!" For a while they were delighted with the fresh, tender meat, but after a time they tired of it, and, seeing me come, would say: "Here comes this old Bill with more buffalo!" and finally they connected the name buffalo and Bill together, and that is where the foundation was laid to the name of "Buffalo Bill," which aft-

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erward I defended as a title with Comstock before the officers at Fort Wallace with success.

I killed buffalo for the railroad company for twelve months, and, during that time, the number I brought into camp was kept account of, and at the end of that period I had killed 4,280 buffalo on old Brigham. This was all accomplished with one needle-gun or breech-loader, which I named "Lucretia Borgia."

During those twelve months I had many fights with the Indians. On several occasions they jumped myself and little party while several miles from the end of the grade. We would always prefer to have them jump us after our wagon was loaded with buffalo hams, for we had rehearsed our little stockade so often that it did not take more than a few minutes from the time we saw them coming until the mules were unhitched from the wagon and tied to the wheels. We would make our breastworks around the wheels of the wagon by throwing out the meat, and would protect ourselves by getting behind the buffalo hams. In this manner we held off from forty to sixty Indians on one or two occasions until we received assistance. I would make my smoke signals at once, which the soldiers would instantly see and rush to our rescue. I had five men killed during my connection with the U. P. R. R., three drivers and the others butchers.

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CHAPTER X

A RACE FOR LIFE

EDITOR'S SANCTUM, CODY CITY, BIG HORN BASIN, WYOMING.

ONE day in the spring of 1868, I mounted Brigham and started for Smoky Hill River. After galloping about twenty miles I reached the top of a small hill overlooking the valley of that beautiful stream. As I was gazing down on the landscape, I suddenly saw a band of about thirty Indians nearly half a mile distant. I knew by the way they jumped on their horses that they had seen me as soon as I came into sight.

The only chance I had for my life was to make a run for it, and I immediately wheeled and started back toward the railroad. Brigham seemed to understand what was up, and he struck out as if he comprehended that it was to be a

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run for life. He crossed a ravine in a few jumps, and on reaching a bridge beyond, I drew rein, looked back and saw the Indians coming for me at full speed and evidently well mounted. I would have had little or no fear of being overtaken if Brigham had been fresh; but as he was not, I felt uncertain as to how he would stand a long chase.

My pursuers seemed to be gaining on me a little, and I let Brigham shoot ahead again. When we had run about three miles farther, some eight or nine of the Indians were not over two hundred yards behind, and five or six of these seemed to be shortening the gap at every jump. Brigham now exerted himself more than ever, and for the next three or four miles he got "right down to business," and did some of the prettiest running I ever saw. But the Indians were about as well mounted as I was, and one of their horses in particular—a spotted animal—was gaining on me all the time. Nearly all the other horses were strung out behind for a distance of two miles, but still chasing after me.

The Indian who was riding the spotted horse was armed with a rifle, and would occasionally send a bullet whistling along, sometimes striking the ground ahead of me. I saw that this fellow must be checked, or a stray bullet from his gun might hit me or my horse; so, suddenly stopping

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Brigham, and quickly wheeling him around, I raised old "Lucretia" to my shoulder, took deliberate aim at the Indian and his horse, hoping to hit one or the other, and fired. He was not over eighty yards from me at this time, and at the crack of my rifle down went his horse. Not waiting to see if he recovered, I turned Brigham, and in a moment we were again fairly flying toward our destination; we had urgent business about that time, and were in a hurry to get there.

The other Indians had gained on us while I was engaged in shooting at their leader, and they sent several shots whizzing past me, but fortunately none of them hit the intended mark. To return their compliment I occasionally wheeled myself in the saddle and fired back at them, and one of my shots broke the leg of one of their horses, which left its rider hors(e) de combat, as the French would say.

Only seven or eight Indians now remained in dangerous proximity to me, and as their horses were beginning to lag somewhat, I checked my faithful old steed a little, to allow him an opportunity to draw an extra breath or two. I had determined, if it should come to the worst, to drop into a buffalo wallow, where I could stand the Indians off for a while; but I was not compelled to do this, as Brigham carried me through most nobly.

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The chase was kept up until we came within three miles of the end of the railroad track, where two companies of soldiers were stationed for the purpose of protecting the workmen from the Indians. One of the outposts saw the Indians chasing me across the prairie, and gave the alarm. In a few minutes I saw, greatly to my delight, men coming on foot, and cavalrymen, too, galloping to our rescue as soon as they could mount their horses. When the Indians saw this, they turned and ran in the direction from which they had come. In a very few minutes I was met by some of the infantrymen and trackmen, and jumping to the ground and pulling the blanket and saddle off Brigham, I told them what he had done for me; they at once took him in charge, led him around, and rubbed him down so vigorously that I thought they would rub him to death.

Captain Nolan, of the Tenth Cavalry, now came up with forty of his men, and upon learning what had happened he determined to pursue the Indians. He kindly offered me one of his cavalry horses, and after putting my own saddle and bridle on the animal, we started out after the flying Indians, who only a few minutes before had been making it so uncomfortably lively for me. Our horses were all fresh and of excellent stock, and we soon began shortening the distance

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between ourselves and the redskins. Before they had gone five miles we overtook and killed eight of their number. The others succeeded in making their escape. On coming up to the place where I had killed the first horse—the spotted one—on my "home run," I found that my bullet had struck him in the forehead and killed him instantly. He was a noble animal, and ought to have been engaged in better business.

When we got back to camp I found old Brigham grazing quietly and contentedly on the grass. He looked up at me as if to ask if we had got away with any of those fellows who had chased us. I believe he read the answer in my eyes.

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CHAPTER XI

HOW I GOT THE TITLE OF "BUFFALO BILL"

Shooting Buffalo on the Plains.

SHORTLY after the adventures mentioned in the preceding chapter, I had my celebrated hunt with Billy Comstock, a noted scout, guide and interpreter, who was then chief of scouts at Fort Wallace, Kansas. Comstock had had the reputation, for a long time, of being a most successful buffalo hunter, and the officers, in particular, who had seen him kill buffaloes, were very desirous of backing him in a match against me. It was accordingly arranged that I should shoot him a buffalo-killing match, and the preliminaries were easily and satisfactorily agreed upon. We were to hunt one day of eight hours, beginning at eight o'clock in the morning, and closing at four o'clock in the afternoon. The wager was five hundred dollars a side, and the

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man who should kill the greater number of buffaloes from horseback was to be declared the winner.

The hunt took place about twenty miles east of Sheridan, and as it had been pretty well advertised and noised abroad, a large crowd witnessed the interesting and exciting scene. An excursion party, mostly from St. Louis, consisting of about a hundred gentlemen and ladies, came out on a special train to view the sport, and among the number was my wife, with little Baby Arta, who had come to remain with me for a while.

The buffaloes were quite plenty, and it was agreed that we should go into the same herd at the same time and "make a run," as we called it, each one killing as many as possible. A referee was to follow each of us on horseback when we entered the herd, and count the buffaloes killed by each man. The St. Louis excursionists, as well as other spectators, rode out to the vicinity of the hunting grounds in wagons and on horseback, keeping well out of sight of the buffaloes, so as not to frighten them, until the time came for us to dash into the herd; when they were to come up as near as they pleased to witness the chase.

We were fortunate in the first run in getting good ground. Comstock was mounted on one

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of his favorite horses, while I rode old Brigham. I felt confident that I had the advantage of Comstock in two things—first, I had the best buffalo horse that ever made a track; the second, I was using what was known at that time as the needle-gun, a breechloading Springfield rifle, caliber .50—it was my favorite old "Lucretia," which has already been introduced to the notice of the reader—while Comstock was armed with a Henry rifle, and although he could fire a few shots quicker than I could, yet I was pretty certain that it did not carry powder and lead enough to do execution equal to my caliber .50.

At last the time came to begin the match. Comstock and I dashed into a herd, followed by the referees. The buffaloes separated; Comstock took the left bunch and I the right. My great forte in killing buffaloes from horseback was to get them circling by riding my horse at the head of the herd, shooting the leaders, thus crowding their followers to the left, till they would finally circle round and round.

On this morning the buffaloes were very accommodating, and I soon had them running in a beautiful circle, when I dropped them thick and fast, until I had killed thirty-eight, which finished my run.

Comstock began shooting at the rear of the herd, which he was chasing, and they kept

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straight on. He succeeded, however, in killing twenty-three, but they were scattered over a distance of three miles, while mine lay close together. I had nursed my buffaloes, as a billiard-player does the balls when he makes a big run.

After the result of the first run had been duly announced, our St. Louis excursion friends—who had approached to the place where we had stopped—set out a lot of champagne, which they had brought with them, and which proved a good drink on a Kansas prairie, and a buffalo hunter was a good man to get away with it.

While taking a short rest, we suddenly spied another herd of buffaloes coming toward us. It was only a small drove, and we at once prepared to give the animals a lively reception. They proved to be a herd of cows and calves—which, by the way, are quicker in their movements than the bulls. We charged in among them, and I concluded my run with a score of eighteen, while Comstock killed fourteen. The score was now fifty-six to thirty-seven in my favor.

Again the excursion party approached, and once more the champagne was tapped. After we had eaten a lunch which was spread for us, we resumed the hunt. Striking out for a distance of three miles, we came up close to another herd. As I was so far ahead of my competitor in the number killed, I thought I could afford to give

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an extra exhibition of my skill. I had told the ladies that I would, on the next run, ride my horse without any saddle or bridle. This had raised the excitement to fever heat among the excursionists, and I remember one fair lady who endeavored to prevail upon me not to do it.

"That's nothing at all," said I; "I have done it many a time, and old Brigham knows as well as I what I am doing, and sometimes a great deal better."

So leaving my saddle and bridle with the wagons, we rode to the windward of the buffaloes, as usual, and when within a few hundred yards of them we dashed into the herd. I soon had thirteen laid out on the ground, the last one of which I had driven down close to the wagons, where the ladies were. It frightened some of the tender creatures to see the buffalo coming at full speed directly toward them; but when he had got within fifty yards of one of the wagons, I had shot him dead in his tracks. This made my sixty-ninth buffalo, and finished my third and last run, Comstock having killed forty-six.

As it was now late in the afternoon, Comstock and his backers gave up the idea that he could beat me, and thereupon the referees declared me the winner of the match, as well as the champion buffalo-hunter of the plains.

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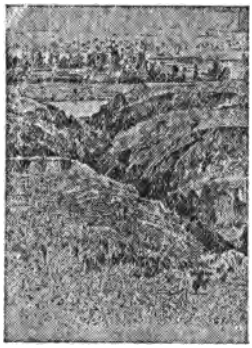
CHAPTER XII

THE PRAIRIE—ITS ATTRACTIONS AND DREADS



I HAVE been many times asked if the solitude of the plains was not burdensome and oppressive to a man who was traveling along some of the vast expanses of the West, where for hundreds of miles there was no one to see but himself, his horses, a boundless level of prairie grass, the blue sky above, with its sun by day and its stars by night. At first the question seemed strange, but I soon understood how a man who has lived all his life in daily touch with Broadway might go melancholy mad in a single day in a region where he could see and hear absolutely nothing but the wonderful panorama of nature and its voices. There was a multitude of things around him to arouse interest, which, to the plainsman, meant safety or danger, life or death;

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but which would mean to such a man, indeed, no more than so many blades of grass. This silent excitement of the solitary ride over the broad prairie, where the city man would see nothing but dull monotony, was something more excitingly fierce than anything I had seen in a town, and I had seen Wall Street crazed. I have watched street riots, I have witnessed royal pageants, and I have seen men lynched. These things stir the blood; but they all seem pale to what I have felt when out alone on a scout. With the knowledge that real danger was concealed, hidden from one's view, but liable at any moment not only to be seen and heard, but felt—feeling that old Jim Bridger expressed it truly that "Whar you don't see anythin', hear nothin', an' thar are no Injuns to be seen, that ginerally is whar they are thickest." Consequently, the scout on duty was compelled to invent ruses of his own to assist him in emergency. And when some extremely dangerous mission had to be undertaken, the scouts often puzzled the commander by refusing aid in the shape of a squad or any chosen number of soldiers to accompany him. But actually it was the part of discretion to do so, as going alone, or with one or two chosen comrades whom you knew to be true blue, was a precaution that favored your own safety; as all scouts naturally picked the very best mounts and rode one, and

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had what is called a "lead horse" well trained to follow and stand by you in every emergency. He had only himself to look out for, and with a good lead horse in a race for life had a fresh remount. Besides, his trail would not so easily be discovered, and, unless it was "hot," it did not induce any prowling bands to follow from avaricious motives that a larger party would, that would give some hope to the red man of plunder and horse-wealth, the acquisition of which was the Indian's standard of prosperity, as is prize money to the sailor, and scalps were his highest aim toward achieving a soldier's glory. Therefore, I always kept myself well provided with well trained steeds, who became wonderfully proficient in scenting danger and even game. The fact that your horses were unshod was another puzzle to a trailing Indian, as a shod-horse print gave him a clew to a white man's presence or the proximity of the military. One of my ruses was to take with me a bugler of the Fifth Cavalry, named Kershaw, who developed a capacity for comradeship in such adventures. Kershaw, after retiring from the army, became Chief of Police at Chester, Pa., near Philadelphia, and died there several years ago. Generally I preferred, like others, going alone, as then I had only myself to look out for; for a wounded comrade, or one that met with any mishap, necessitated self-sacrifice

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in emergency, as it was naturally understood that you would have to stand by him. I took Kershaw with me often, as I knew the country was infested with large bands of Indians, when it was too dangerous to travel in daytime and your object could be best accomplished in the night. His value as "a striker" can be best explained by the following incident: On one occasion we slept during the day in a well wooded box cañon, near a little stream of water, with plenty of grass for the horses to browse on, and at the same time we were hidden from view. Toward evening when we thought it convenient to continue our scout, just as we were about to emerge from our hiding place, a large band of Indians assembled down the cañon to camp for the night. Mounted as they were, it was useless for us to attempt flight, so, moving further backward in the woods, we remained concealed until they had settled down. There was no way to get out except a dash through the Indian village. We dared not stay till daylight, as they might find our trail, and they would have us corraled, so we quietly waited until they had settled down, when we mounted and sneaked toward the edge of the village, where there was an avenue of escape. Their faithful dogs of course alarmed the camp, so the best we could do was to make a dash out, wheel and fire as quick as we could, and Kershaw with his faith-

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ful bugle blew the charge. Riding quickly around the village, we made another little firing at them and sounded the bugle charge again. A repetition of this at another point and a bugle charge threw them into confusion, stampeded their ponies, prevented their quick mounting, and while they went in one direction bold Kershaw and myself were riding like the devil in another. Naturally, of course, this gave the Indians something to think of in the night while we got to the post and informed Colonel Royal of the location, and with Major Brown, Captain Bache, Lieutenant Jack Hayes and a detachment of cavalry, went on the trail, which was followed for two days, and the Indians were severely punished, with but few casualties on our side.

Kershaw was a good hunter, and was with me on one occasion on a buffalo hunt, where, in a run after buffalo for camp, my gun, old "Lucretia," performed the feat of killing, by one shot, three buffaloes that ran obliquely close together. On another occasion, when getting fresh meat for Fort Sheridan, we were greatly annoyed at times on our buffalo hunt by being jumped by the Indians, who, in those days, were generally out with the same object. Many a hot skirmish, or many a run for it, was necessary. Buffalo naturally were some distance from the fort, and I thought

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of a trick by which I could give my red brothers a surprise. In a run for it, a few miles from the fort, was a hog-back that furnished a good defensive position, and I had often noticed that it had a long, deep, bushy ravine. It was in the nature almost of a natural fortification, so I thought how I could get them to repeat their many attacks on me when I ran to this particular point, from which I could signal for help to the fort with hasty grass fires and "smoke that talked." Buffalo were at the time plentiful, so I secured Kershaw and about fifteen good marksmen, with provisions for the trip, and started out before daylight for the hunt. Hiding the soldiers in this ravine, we proceeded on our journey and had not the wagons half-filled before my striker, Bill White, announced Indians in the distance, "and a big band, too," said Bill. Away we went for the hog-back, and it was lickety-split, with the Indians gaining on us every minute. We reached it, threw our wagons into position, packed our buffalo hams out for breastworks, threw some straw about and gathered up some dead grass to make a signal. The Indians, seeing it, knew that relief would come and they hadn't a moment to lose if they wanted our scalps. On they came, dashing around. Myself and teamsters and five or six of us banging away at them, they circled around and drew off, as

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SIOUX CHIEF, IRON TAIL, NOW WITH BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST.

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they commonly did, and at a distance of about seventy-five yards from the ambush. As usual, they bunched together, listening to the wrangle of the chief. Bang! bang! bang! and the old Winchesters began to talk from the ravine, while Kershaw, with his bugle, blew the charge, the Indians tumbling here, there and everywhere out of their saddles, the rest scattering with the speed of jack-rabbits in all directions. Assembling on the distant hills, they realized that the jig was up, particularly when they saw the cavalry coming in the distance. Somehow or other, during the remainder of the season, they never seemed to molest the butcher-wagon with the same appetite. And the fort always had fresh meat.

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CHAPTER XIII

MY FIRST MEETING WITH GENERAL SHERIDAN

General Sheridan.

It is apropos here to describe my first meeting with General Phil Sheridan. That carries me back to what I can emphatically describe as a most stormy time—the time, the place and the devolving duties give me food for thought.

First, what a little thing man is! Nature, how grandly forceful she is when aroused to fury!

This law of creation that is gradually harnessing some of nature's powers, that bridges torrential streams, sending the iron horse over limitless travels for commerce, and conquering many of the mysteries of air, earth and sea, and which seemingly brings all things under subjugation to man's will—it is nothing when brought face to face with angry nature. Weak and trembling in

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the path of the cyclone, tornado, waterspout and volcanic eruption, flood, earthquake and that terror of the plains, the blizzard, his limbs quake, his heart quails, and, if not in a virile condition, his blood congeals, and his mind in prayer appeals to a higher power for miraculous intervention. If that does not come, then every trained faculty, with nerve to apply them to overcoming the conditions and gaining safety, is necessary, or else the jig is up.

I have had many experiences with genuine blizzards—a combination of snow-storm, cyclone and tornado—that sweeps from the Arctics down the American plains, even to the Rio Grande, in which neighborhood it receives the appropriate cognomen, the Norther. The blizzard has been libeled in the East, though there has been in my generation but one in the neighborhood of New York, which was in 1888, one that tied up the country, caused numerous deaths, notably that of the Hon. Roscoe Conkling. A blizzard occurs at a time of winter when several previous snow-storms have left the earth covered with deep snow, when the new storm, driven with cyclonic force, is not only in the air, but the deeply bedded covering is agitated into mingling with cutting force, thus making the heavens and the earth both contribute to the conditions that inspire such confusion and terror. The force of the wind, blow-

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ing at the rate of from fifty to eighty miles an hour, breaks up the snowflakes into an almost infinitesimal fineness, and this is driven through space at incredible speed, looking almost like a solid mass. So thick does it become, that no object can be seen half a dozen feet away, and, at the same time, the noise made by the rushing winds prevents the voice of the strongest-lunged being heard beyond half a score of steps. This fine snow blown in the face succeeds in a very few moments in blinding the one caught in it, and he is only able to struggle forward, impotent to aid himself, except by locomotion, until either guided by instinct or accident he stumbles into safety, or goes down in utter physical exhaustion to despair, sleep and, perhaps, eternal oblivion.

These storms "sneak up" on the world as though they were some sort of Nemesis, following only to destroy. The morning before a blizzard is generally of the bright kind that inspires one to get about and be doing something. Farmers start for the towns to do their trading, ranchmen and shepherds ride out long distances to visit their corrals or sheepfolds. Later in the day, light clouds gather and obscure the sun, while a gentle fall of snow warrants no fear for the moment. But gradually the clouds grow blacker, the storm increases rapidly, and before shelter

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can be reached the blizzard is on with all its fierceness and destructiveness to life and property. The temperature grows colder, and 20 to 50 degrees below zero is often recorded.

The minor-blowing snow-storms, regularly alluded to as "blizzards," are misnamed, for a blizzard is generally confined to the open plains, and the East is pretty well protected by the Alleghany and Cumberland range of mountains. Singular to relate, the word "blizzard," though familiarized as an application to these peculiar storms in the West, must have been brought there by some ancient mariner or ex-man-of-war's-man, who recognized its descriptive availability when the old sea-dog struck this Arctic cyclone. The word "blizzard" was originally used as a sailor's substitute for broadside, to define the difference from a simultaneous broadside fire, to designate a continuous rain or hail in firing from the ship. It was about the year 1806 when it was first used as a descriptive term to apply to the fierce storms of our West and Northwest. No other country or other place seems to be able to get up such a conflict in nature as to cause her to show her power in this chilling manner. About the best method of describing one of these atmospherical disturbances is to say that it is a snow-storm exaggerated some ten-thousand-fold.

It was in one of these blizzards that the meet-

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ing between General Phil Sheridan and myself occurred, and you will permit me, having such a good substitute, to allow that great cavalry leader himself to tell the story in an extract from his "Autobiography." This was written so many years ago that it is naturally confined now to select libraries. Our great cavalry leader is famed in the military annals of the world as having, during the Civil War, organized and instituted an annex to the cavalry arm, in the shape of mounted infantry, so that riflemen could be quickly hurried from point to point, dismount, and fight as infantry. It will probably also be a matter of news to many that after the Civil War he instituted an entirely new method of Indian warfare, and I am proud to say that he chose me among the many at its inception and throughout its effective execution. During the war that the whites were engaged in, in their colossal contest, the Indian simply ran riot over the plains, and in olden days the white's and Indian's game was to avoid each other, except when cunning and strategy permitted either to have a "dead-sure" thing. But in winter both white and red paid a wholesome respect to nature and climatic conditions by going into camp and having an unwritten observance of what might be called an armistice, or, like the bear, they hibernated. General Sheridan found himself for the first

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time with veteran cavalrymen, and in a condition for the first time in history to seek for, follow, trail, hunt, fight and punish the insolent foe at a season of the year when his commissary stores, both for men and horses, were as limited as they were as easily available in spring and summer. His inauguration of this plan at the finish of the war marks an epoch in frontier fighting which was more sanguinary, more dangerous, than in former days, as the Indians at this time became well supplied, through French-Canadian and other traders, who had an ample supply of firearms and ammunition, meeting the army as regards equipment at least equally, and in topography superior.

The following is the extract from General Sheridan's work to which I allude:

"In those days (about 1868), the railroad town of Hays City was filled with so-called 'Indian scouts,' whose common boast was of having slain scores of redskins, but the real scout—that is, a guide and trailer knowing the habits of the Indians—was very scarce, and it was hard to find anybody familiar with the country south of the Arkansas, where the campaign was to be made. Still about Hays City and the various military posts there was some good material to select from, and we managed to employ several men, who, from their experience on the plains

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in various capacities, or from natural instinct and aptitude, soon became excellent guides and courageous and valuable scouts, some of them, indeed, gaining much distinction. Mr. William F. Cody ('Buffalo Bill'), whose renown has since become world-wide, was one of the men thus selected. He received his sobriquet from his marked success in killing buffaloes for a contractor, to supply fresh meat to the construction parties on the Kansas Pacific Railroad. He had given up this business, however, and was now in the employ of the quartermaster's department of the army, and was first brought to my notice by distinguishing himself in bringing me an important despatch from Fort Larned to Fort Hays, a distance of sixty-five miles, through a section infested with Indians. The despatch informed me that the Indians near Larned were preparing to decamp, and this intelligence required that certain orders should be carried to Fort Dodge, ninety-five miles south of Hays. This too being a particularly dangerous route—several couriers having been killed on it—it was impossible to get one of the various 'Petes,' 'Jacks,' or 'Jims' hanging around Hays City to take my communication. Cody, learning of the strait I was in, manfully came to the rescue, and proposed to make the trip to Dodge, though he had just finished his long and perilous ride from Larned.

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I gratefully accepted his offer, and after four or five hours' rest he mounted a fresh horse and hastened on his journey, halting but once to rest on the way, and then only for an hour, the stop being made at Coon Creek, where he got another mount from a troop of cavalry. At Dodge he took six hours' sleep, and then continued on to his own post—Fort Larned—with more despatches. After resting twelve hours at Larned, he was again in the saddle with tidings for me at Fort Hays, General Hazen sending him this time, with word that the villages had fled to the south of the Arkansas. Thus, in all, Cody rode about 350 miles in less than sixty hours, and such an exhibition of endurance and courage was more than enough to convince me that his service would be extremely valuable in the campaign, so I retained him at Fort Hays till the battalion of the Fifth Cavalry arrived, and then made him chief of scouts for that regiment.

"The information brought me by Cody on his second trip from Larned indicated where the villages would be found in the winter, and I decided to move on them about the first of November. Only the women and children and the decrepit old men were with the villages, however—enough, presumably, to look after the plunder—most of the warriors remaining north of the Arkansas to continue their marauding."

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CHAPTER XIV

MY FIRST MEETING WITH GENERAL CUSTER

General Custer.

My first meeting with General George A. Custer was when I was a scout in the Department of the Missouri, in the spring of 1867. At this time, General Custer's regiment, the Seventh Cavalry, United States Army, was at Fort Larned, on Pawnee Fork, near the Arkansas River.

One evening the General arrived at Fort Hays from Fort Harker. He had with him only two officers and three orderlies. The General told Captain Ovenshine, who was in command of Fort Hays at the time, that he wished to leave Fort Hays the next morning at daylight to join his regiment, and wanted a guide who knew the country, one that would make no mistake, well mounted, to guide him to Fort Larned.

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Captain Ovenshine sent for me and told me to be ready sharp at daylight to go with General Custer, and that he wanted me to have the best mount there was at the post. At that time the horses at the fort were pretty well run down from many chases after Indians, but I was riding and had at the time as good a long-distance horse as I have ever known, and he was a mule. Knowing General Custer by reputation, that he was a fast traveler and allowed no grass to grow under his feet, and knowing that the General and his party were well mounted (the General himself was riding a Kentucky thoroughbred), I looked after my mule that night pretty carefully and whispered to him that there would be something doing the next day.

At daylight I rode up to the commanding officer's quarters and Captain Ovenshine introduced me, for the first time, to General Custer. The General, seeing that I was mounted on a mule, turned to Captain Ovenshine and said:

"Captain, I haven't got time to dilly-dally along the road with a mule. I see that my guide here is mounted on a mule. I want him to have a horse, and a good one."

I said: "General, this is the best horse at the fort, and I assure you that he won't be much behind you when you reach Fort Larned."

The Captain explained to the General that the

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horses were in pretty bad condition at the fort, and that he had heard me brag so much about that mule that he felt quite sure that the beast was all right.

The General seemed a little displeased and said: "Well, if that is the best you have, I will have to put up with it."

We mounted and started out on the road. For the first fifteen miles, to Smoky Hill River, there was a good wagon road, and as we rode along the General asked me numerous questions in regard to the country and the Indians, and thus we talked along mile after mile. But the General was going at a pretty rapid gait and my mule was not very speedy on the start, but I knew he would finish all right. So when the General was not looking I would put the spurs to the mule a little to wake him up. However, I kept alongside of the General until I got to Smoky Hill River. I noticed that the old mule was not panting much, but the horses were.

I told the General that this would be the last water for forty-five miles, until we got near Larned; that it would be best to water the horses there, and if the men required any water they had better fill up their canteens, which they did.

From this point we struck into the sand-hills, leaving all roads. It was pretty sandy and pretty heavy traveling for horse or mule, but I made

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up my mind that I would show the General, from there on, that I had spoken the truth about the mule. So, when the General was not looking at me, I would put the spurs to him, and, as he would lunge ahead, I would say:

"Whoa, there! Take it easy, old fellow. Don't get to frettin'."

We went on like that for a mile or so. The mule would get ahead of the horses, and whenever the General wasn't looking I would spur him, and, as the mule would forge ahead, I would pat him to calm him down.

Finally the General remarked: "That is really quite a horse you are riding there."

"Oh, he isn't warmed up yet, General," I said. "He doesn't go good until he gets his second wind."

The escort was stringing out quite a little behind, though we were leading a pretty fast pace, and kept this up for quite a number of miles, when the General observed:

"Well, we will have to wait until my escort catches up."

And while we waited I would be patting the mule on the back and holding him by the bit to keep him from running away. When the escort caught up and stopped to blow their horses a little, away we went again, because the General did not want to acknowledge that his thorough-

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bred could be beaten by any mule. And every few miles we would have to stop and wait for the escort to catch up.

By this time the mule was really beginning to show his staying qualities over the Kentucky horse that the General was riding, and the General could not keep up. But the General would not give up, and we went on mile after mile through the sand-hills, until, finally, I had actually to wait on the General a little. Every once in a while the General would remark about that mule. But we went on, and the General still would not give in. We continued going until we got within about fifteen miles of Fort Larned. Here we stopped on a hill to wait for the officers and orderlies to overtake us. When they got up, I showed the General a depression in the sand-hills and told him that that was the Pawnee Fork Creek, and that all we had to do was to follow the creek down and we would come to the fort.

"Now, General," I said, "if you have any urgent dispatches that you want taken to your commanding officer, if you will give them to me I will take them on and have them delivered to him. You cannot help but find your way."

"Ah," he said, "you are kidding me about what I said in regard to that mule. Well," turning to one of the officers, "you bring the escort in.

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Follow the direction we are going, and I will go on with Cody."

And we started, I giving him as lively a ride as his horse could stand until we reached the fort. That night the General's horse died. The next morning, at guard mount, I rode up to the headquarters of Fort Larned, which was commanded by Captain Daingerfield Parker, with whom the General was stopping, and reported to him. I said that if he had no further use for me, I would return to my own fort, and that if he had any dispatches he wanted taken back to Fort Hays I would take them, as I expected to get there in eight hours on the same mule.

He laughed and said: "Well, I will never say anything against a mule again."

Nor did the General ever forget that mule, and, whenever I met him in after years, he always inquired about the mule.

General Custer was an enthusiastic hunter. During the summer of 1867 I had the pleasure of accompanying him on several buffalo hunts, and we also hunted deer, antelope, and turkey together.

The General was full of life and was a splendid entertainer in camp, besides being quite a practical joker. He liked to play practical jokes, and delighted in taking certain tenderfeet out for a night's snipe-hunting.

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The way this hunt is pulled off, some one during the evening would remark:

"Well, I saw a big drove of snipe over behind the little bench, and I think we had better go and get them to-night, and have a nice big snipe breakfast. Nice and young, good and juicy; and this is the best time to get them."

Some tenderfoot who was among the party would be anxious to go and would inquire how they catch them at night. Then some one would tell him that the way we caught them was to take a large gunny-sack or oat-sack, and one man would go up to the head of the ravine, where the ravine was very narrow, and sit behind the sack, holding the mouth of the sack open. The rest of the party were to surround the snipe in the ravine and quietly drive the bunch up the dry bed of the ravine until they got near the head, where the man was holding the sack, and the snipe, of course, would naturally run into the sack. The man would then only have to close the mouth of the sack, and he would have a sackful of snipe.

This being the easiest job, the tenderfoot was delighted to hold the sack. Some one of the men would take him away off, probably a mile or more from camp, and place him there, while the rest of the party were to drive the snipe into it. All the rest, instead of driving the snipe into the

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sack, would quietly steal off to bed, leaving the ambitious hunter there holding the sack.

I have known tenderfeet to stay and hold the sack all night before tumbling to the fact that they had been sold. Others would stay out an hour or two, and, becoming disgusted, would return to camp to find all their friends sound asleep. Then they, too, would find that they had been sold, and would crawl into bed and go to sleep.

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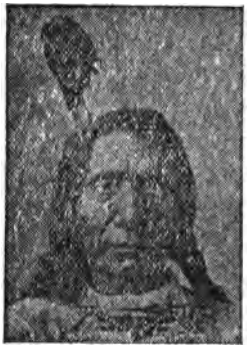
CHAPTER XV

THE FORT PHIL KEARNY MASSACRE



Red Cloud.

In the recital of these various episodes in my career the reader must remember that they are but a few, not only in my own experience, but infinitesimal in comparison with the many that were constantly occurring on a vast theater of the plains, extending from the Canadian border on the north to the Rio Grande on the south, and from the Missouri on the east to the foot-hills of the Rockies on the west. This was an arena, a scene of action, larger than any identified with any known past war in the world's history.

Many of the most celebrated wars of Europe were enacted in a space that would be hardly noticeable in this colossal field of savage contest. This gave a liberty of action that greatly favored

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the aborigines, as, with their marvelous mobility, their familiarity with the topography, with the immense herds of buffalo and other game to replenish his commissary, with vast herds of ponies, faithful as dogs, trained to follow him and forage for themselves, the Indian when on the war-path as regards impedimenta had a distinct advantage in celerity of pursuit or in rapidity of retreat. His tactics were of such an original nature as to almost reach strategic perfection, and his freedom of action, in scattering like chaff before the winds in emergency and reassembling at some distant spot to return to the attack under advantageous circumstances, could only be likened to the activity of a Jersey mosquito. The necessity, to a great extent, of the soldiers to keep in close contact, made them greatly dependent on the intelligence of that offspring of experience in this practically new game of warfare, the reliability and judgment of the scout. On him the responsibility rested, and many of my brave confrères gave invaluable service to the cause. That is, I wish to impress upon the reader that while telling these plain, unvarnished tales of the plains, many more could be added, but of such a similar character that their interest would depend solely upon the difference in situation and the technical methods of meeting it, that could be only elaborated in a much larger book, and also

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to impress the fact that I was not the "only pebble on the beach," but one who possibly was as lucky and fortunate as competent. A roster of the great scouts would be too long to repeat, but while I was at one point, there were others facing, with more or less success, the same risks, dangers and problems as I. I also wish here to say that victory did not always perch on the white man's banner, for at some stages of the game the red rangers went us one better. While Roman Nose, Black Kettle, Tall Bull, Yellow Hand, and numbers of great chiefs received stinging defeats and were sent to the happy hunting grounds themselves, the pages of frontier history teem with sanguinary successes, which will show that the red man did not always "get it in the neck." One of these successful red warriors, who for years was known as the "Terror of the Plains," well earned that title, and that is my present Indian friend, Red Cloud, now living at Pine Ridge Agency, over eighty years old, blind and feeble, and whose obituaries, when he crosses the Divide, will revive the stories of an epoch that will be instructive to the entire nation and intensely interesting to the great centers of industry and agriculture now existing where he once roamed at will. His presence on the scene to-day, and the civilized condition of his people and the progress they are making, is a striking lesson on how

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WAR DANCES AND MAKING MEDICINE BEFORE GOING TO WAR.

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quickly Western history has been made. Among his many feats was the wily cunning with which he engineered what is known as the "Fort Phil Kearny Massacre." As an example of the feeling that his very name inspired, an incident will illustrate: On old Red Cloud's last visit East to Washington and New York, he was my guest, and when Major Burke, escorting him from the station with American Horse and Rocky Bear, entered the lobby of the Madison Square Garden, Colonel "Billy" Worth and his adjutant were standing there in the half-darkness of the entry, and when the distinguished Indian visitors arrived an introduction to him was given. Colonel "Billy" looked up at the tall Indian in astonishment, and, as they passed on in, he said: "What! What the deuce are you giving me? Who did you say that was?" "Why, Red Cloud." "Why, really? Great Scott! he was the worriment of my youth. How that redskin did make me hop across the prairies in daytime and sleep restlessly in my blanket at night! Come on, let me have a good look at him. It is refreshing under these conditions." Colonel "Billy" joined me, with his old-time terror, at lunch. Poor Colonel "Billy" received such attention from the sharp-shooting Spaniards at Santiago that he never recovered from it. He gained a star for his shoulder-strap, being wounded three times at San Juan Hill, and

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proved a gallant son of his gallant father, whose monument stands on Broadway, opposite the Hoffman House. Well, to return to the times of old and Fort Phil Kearny. Fort Phil Kearny is probably more famed as a seat of continuous contests than any spot in the West. Located in 1866, it was for two or three years continually in a state of siege, in the irregular Indian method —like the flight of a swallow in the twilight—appearing and disappearing with lightning rapidity. There was hardly a time that a stroll outside of the stockade did not savor of an invitation to death. It had been attacked as often as fifteen times in one month and twenty in another month, and was a rendezvous for the wagon trains following the Bozeman trail, which invited attack for plunder as well as for revenge. The Sioux Indians, notwithstanding there was a partial treaty, resented its establishment, as they saw that it would be a protecting point for settlements. Red Cloud was then a young, ambitious and a most powerful rising chief of the Ogalalla Sioux, and ignored the actions of the older Indian chiefs. In 1865, at the Harney-Sanborne treaty, he boldly denounced the white man's invasion, sprang up from the council, called on the discontented to follow him, and went on the war-path. From that time that section became a veritable burying-ground, wherever the wily

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chief could succeed in finding subjects for his vengeance. At this early stage of active aggression by the United States army, there were many distinguished officers of brilliant record and personal bravery beyond compare in the Civil War who came Westward filled with ambitions, but with contempt of the Indian foe—veterans in the art of civilized warfare, but victims in many instances to the strategic cunning of the Indian. Red Cloud kept the fort in constant agitation, even making it dangerous to collect wood on the surrounding hillsides. In the first six months, there were 154 persons killed and a great number wounded, besides hundreds of animals, cattle and mules stolen. One of these attacks is famed because of the fall of Colonel Fetterman, and his men were practically victims of gallantry and indiscretion. Colonel Fetterman was a man with a splendid record. Although he had several experiences, in one of which Lieutenant Bingham was killed, together with several soldiers, and only the timely arrival of General Carrington himself saved them, yet he still expressed himself that with "a hundred men he could ride through the Sioux nation." On the fatal occasion, the wood-train had been sent out to secure wood and bring timber to finish building the hospital for the fort. Soon information was brought from one of the outposts on the hill to General Car-

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rington that the train was in peril. Colonel Fetterman was put in command of about 100 men and started to form a junction with the wood-train. He made a detour, hoping to take the Indians in the rear. The Indian scouts, on seeing his advance from the other side of the hill, left a few to occupy the attention of the wood-train and concentrated on Fetterman. The wood-train broke corral and went off seven miles northeast of the fort to the Piney. The Indians massed in overwhelming numbers, and, notwithstanding the bravery of the little command, simply wiped them out of existence, and then retired to celebrate their victory. In one spot was found a pile of about forty-nine men stripped of clothing and mutilated. Colonels Fetterman and Brown were found lying side by side, some believing that, at the last moment, rather than be captured, they died by each other's hands. Lieutenant Grummond, who had escaped a similar fate almost a month before, was among the dead. The bodies were strewn along the road to where he lay. The bodies of two civilians, Messrs. Whitley and Fisher, were found with 100 empty shells, showing that these frontiersmen had sold their lives dearly. There were great clots of blood found on the ground and grass, showing that the defenders had stung the enemy fiercely. The news of this disaster was received all over

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the country with horror, while from one end of the plains to the other, among the red men, rang peans of praise for the great young Red Cloud; and his achievements gave him a power in the Sioux councils that he held through many long years. It also gave the plainsmen and the military a lesson that the red man was not a foe to be despised. In fact, it seems to me that the more deadly the weapons of the present day become, personal bravery and individual defiance of danger would be as it was with the savage Indians, more subservient to cunning, strategy and foresight, aided by the adoption of the methods of present mechanism and science. Anyhow, for many, many years Red Cloud kept us guessing and always on guard.

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CHAPTER XVI

ONE YEAR AFTER, OR RED CLOUD AND CAPTAIN POWELL—THIRTY-TWO AGAINST THREE THOUSAND AT FORT PHIL KEARNY—MAGIC OF THE NEW GUN, "BAD MEDICINE" MACHINE

RED CLOUD'S continued success drew to his ranks ambitious braves from every section, every tribe and every nation of Indians contributing in some measure to swell his ranks. Renegades from even former opposing tribes, fighting chiefs and warriors from the Northern Sioux, the Unkpapas, Miniconjous, Ogalallas, Brules and Sans Arcs, besides hundreds of Cheyennes, and stray discontented bands from the Southern Comanches, Arapahoes, Kiowas, and others from the South, came to join him, until he had such a formidable

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organization that if it were understood that these tribes were of as many nations as distinct in a way as among the white races, one-half of his followers would be entitled to the name and devilish recklessness of the most famed "foreign legions." To say that he kept the vast theater of contest in hot water, a continuous stew, or made the plains as active as a picnic party or a hornets' nest, is not exaggeration. He kept Fort Phil Kearny practically invested for a year, and with predatory bands, sent here and there over the plains, he carried devastation and destruction to the most unexpected quarters, possessing as he did an organization that, conditions permitting, made his force as effective as light-horse cavalry. However, the inventive genius and commercial spirit of the white man in shop and factory was actively engaged in producing firearms so improved that, like the needle-gun in the Prussians' hands in the European wars of 1866 to 1872, they created in his simple mind an astonishment that he could not believe or dream of until he suffered from a fearful demonstration of the fact. Myself and others, of course, kept up our personal "pull" by adopting every improvement from the old muzzle-loader to the breechloading Springfield and the repeaters, Henry, Remington and Winchester, which gave us often the necessary protective advan-

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tage. This improvement in arms was destined, a little over a year after the Fetterman massacre, to give Red Cloud and "Mr. Injun" the surprise of their lives, and something to think of as "Bad Medicine." Savage as we have called him, the Indian in his primitive state was most loyal in his belief and appeal, under all circumstances and conditions, to the Supreme Being, always appealing for guidance, assistance and success to the "Great Spirit." Whether it was in following the chase for subsistence, success in war, for rapine, murder, plunder or horse-stealing, for abundance in crops and grasses, or in conquests in love, he was strikingly imbued with the necessity of the Great Ruler's friendly assistance, or "Good Medicine." Failure in all these pursuits he attributed to the preponderating influence of the "Evil Spirit" or "Bad Medicine." So, after several campaigns of continued success, the reader can imagine the surprise, not to say consternation and depression, that resulted from his audacious attempt to at last annihilate the garrison at Fort Phil Kearny. He assembled nearly three thousand warriors for this purpose, all well equipped with carbines and muzzle-loaders, but was unaware that the fort had been supplied with the new Allen modification of the Springfield breech-loading rifle. Besides the rifles, carbines, etc., the Indians were

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mighty well equipped for close-in fighting with the bow and arrow. With the latter, in time of war, and in a close fight with the whites, an expert archer could keep up a stream of these death-dealing missiles with a rapidity equaling the best Winchester of to-day, and limited only to the number of arrows, a hundred or more that his quivers held. In the scheme of battle that Red Cloud had designed on this occasion, he had intended to overwhelm, even at great loss, the ability of a muzzle-loading enemy to withstand his attack, backed with the arrow experts, whose work would be far superior to that of the revolver. This had been done in minor engagements successfully, but had never been tried on as complete a scale as "Red" intended it on this occasion, though the idea just simply happened a little too late. Suddenly investing the fort, he found the wood-train, as he thought, in exactly the same condition as it had been under Fetterman; but experience had taught the troops, who, armed magnificently and under the capable lead of Captain Jas. W. Powell and Lieutenant Jenness, had been long preparing for defense in case of surprise. In hauling the timber and wood for winter use, the wagon beds were not used, the wood and timber being carried upon the running gears, and the wagon beds were used to form an oblong corral, with openings at each end, so that

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in emergency they could be closed by wagons which had the beds on them. The wagon beds were used to store all the camp equipage, clothing, commissaries, etc., while reënforced with sand-bags and anything that would stop a bullet, and, if I remember correctly, they were lined with boiler iron, with rifle loop-holes, making a splendid protection to the besieged. This lining of the wagons with boiler iron had been adopted by us some time before, and I mention it now as a forerunner of the after-adoption of similar methods on railroad engines, on war vessels, and on the contemplated war automobiles of to-day. As preliminary to the attack on the fort, Red Cloud thought to repeat the Fetterman result and sent about five hundred picked men to surround the little corral to which Powell and the woodmen had retreated, numbering thirty-two in all. Wagon sheets were thrown over the tops of the wagon beds to screen the defenders from observation and save them perhaps from the ill-effects of the arrow fire at close quarters. There was plenty of ammunition and plenty of rifles. Every man had at least three, and some no fewer than eight. Some men, who were not considered deadly shots, were told off to keep cleaning up for the others. There was a quartet of old frontiersmen, led by one renowned as a dead shot, Joe Meriville, and others whose names at the present time I sincerely

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regret that I cannot remember, who averaged eight or ten weapons apiece. Powell himself took one end of the corral and Jenness the other, and everything was prepared to give the haughty Sioux a lesson in the range, power and wonderful rapidity of fire which the new rifle permitted. At the same time, the Indians had really surprised them, and appeared in such numbers that the little garrison, from commander down, on hasty consultation decided that it was a forlorn hope to think of escape, though all were determined to fight to the last breath. The Indians spread out and gallantly charged, while the main body of Indians between them and the fort looked on exultantly, fully prepared to take advantage of any opening. Powell had commanded not a shot to be fired until his orders, and, inspiring his men with his own coolness, it was reserved until the yelling horde came within one hundred and fifty, then one hundred, then fifty yards from them, when "Fire, boys! Fire!" was shouted, and a perfect sheet of flame burst forth, horses and riders tumbled, and a driving sleet of bullets struck the charging mass. To the Indians' astonishment, the fire did not stop at one volley, as usual, but continued to belch forth uninterruptedly. Then the foe circled around at a mad gallop, but, like the blazing spark from a fireworks pin-wheel, the corral responded with

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death-dealing effect, which at last the survivors hurriedly escaped from. The result to the defenders was encouraging, as a mass of horses, with dead and wounded Indians, lay in all directions, as a forest of trees falls by the striking of a tornado. The corral lost the gallant Lieutenant Jenness, with a bullet through his head, one soldier was killed and two were severely wounded, leaving twenty-eight at the post. To the Indians the whole affair was a terrible puzzle, and they actually believed that the corral held ten times the number of men, for they now adopted a new method by preparing to surround the corral with skirmishers, the bow-and-arrow men creeping forward ahead of those with rifles, taking advantage of every depression in the ground until within range, then to overcome the besieged with gun and arrow fire when the main attack would be made by the entire body of warriors. This was wonderfully skilful in execution, but the defense was almost impregnable, and the defenders were silent under the fusillade that tore into the wagons and the arrows that pierced through the sheets. So terrific was the fire, that it sounded like crackling thunder, and the strategic silence that ensued caused the Indians to think that it had been effective, although, actually, not a defender was hurt in this second attack. Under a heavy fire

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from the skirmishers, a thousand Indians broke into a charge, encouraged by the silence, when again rang out the merciless fire, led by Powell's own rifle. On they pressed until almost to the wagon beds, suffering from a slaughter almost unheard of, when back they again rode. A few feet more, and it would have been all over in a hand-to-hand conflict. But so close had they come that some of the men threw missiles in their faces.

This was repeated for six times, the sixth being the final charge and repulse, which if it had been followed by another would have been successful, as many of the rifles had become overheated, others useless, and the ammunition was nearly exhausted. Then, to add to the general joy, the distant sound of a howitzer was heard, and Major Smith from the fort, with one hundred men, was seen in the distance, and a shell burst in the midst of the Indians as another puzzle in the use of arms. The principal effort the Indians made then was to carry off their wounded, which they eventually succeeded in doing, after making a stand for a while against Smith's command, when, disheartened and dismayed, they sullenly retreated. Captain Powell, in his report, says that another attack would have been successful, owing to the exhausted condition of arms, ammunition and men. The Indians had a splendid

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opportunity in the open to check Smith's command, but, believing in the Great Spirit's anger and that there was "Bad Medicine" in the neighborhood, they thought it best to retire from the influence of the "Evil Spirit." So strenuous was this fight that the participants were for several days almost crazed with excitement and nervous strain, many with their health completely broken; while Powell himself was never the same robust man after that woeful day. Years afterward, it was ascertained that the loss on the part of the Indians was 1,137. Colonel Dodge likens it to a story of Cortez; almost incredible was it; while it is even now referred to by the Indians as the "Bad Medicine" fight with the white man.

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CHAPTER XVII

CUSTER'S FIGHT AT THE WASHITA

It will be remembered that General Sheridan had instituted methods of fighting the Indians somewhat in their own style, and continuing it under the most distressing conditions in the winter. His object, of course, was to attack, punish, and, if necessary, successfully carom them, like a billiard ball, properly handled, "to safety," or, in other words, to the cushion—a fort or a protected rendezvous. Among his ablest and most daring lieutenants at the time was the dashing cavalry hero of the Army of the Potomac, whose fame is forever enshrined in the memory of his country. The record of this man at the close of the Civil War, when, at the age of twenty-four, he had risen from a second lieutenant to major-general, commanding a division of

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cavalry, is remarkable. Transferred with a regiment of well selected veterans (the Seventh United States Cavalry) to the frontier, he duplicated in all but one instance his brilliant record by many successes in the peculiar "hide-and-go-seek" savage warfare of the plains. I allude to "Old Curly," as styled by his men, and to the "White Chief of the Yellow Hair," as styled by the Indians, General George Armstrong Custer.

His final campaign is so strikingly remembered that it is well here to give a short description of one of his thrillingly successful battles, sometimes called "Custer's Victory of the Washita." I have already described the difficulty of campaigning in winter, in the snows and blizzards, and this march and fight was accompanied by the most exacting physical discomforts that imagination can grasp. As it occurred in 1868, from Sheridan's desire to punish Black Kettle's band of marauders, this chief having succeeded Roman Nose, killed in the fight with Forsyth. The latter, one of the most crafty, successful, and brutal of the plains Indians, had raided with extraordinary success, and, with his plunder and captives, had joined Satanta's and Little Raven's bands so as to be in full force in case of attack, while enjoying a rest from the winter's storms in some secluded haven of safety.

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This very repose was what the military authorities desired to prevent, as I have said before, at any cost, in defiance of the conditions.

General Sheridan, who was in command of the Department, was himself in the field. These Indians, having perpetrated many outrages, popular indignation seconded and demanded active retribution. The Indians, naturally, in winter drifted southward if possible, and Sheridan had made a rendezvous at Camp Supply, in Indian Territory, a hundred miles south of Fort Dodge. Believing that they were in camp in concealment somewhere, Sheridan elected to detach Custer and his regiment and send them on a scout, while he himself would seek in another direction, with Camp Supply as a base. On November 23d, at four o'clock in the morning, in a snow-storm, Custer reported himself ready to march, with his usual evidenced anxiety to get on the trail. Floundering through the snow, but with such experienced guides as "Old California Joe" Corbin, and Romero, Little Beaver and some Osage Indian scouts, the command moved on for fifteen miles to Wolf Creek, where a meal was greatly enjoyed and assisted to counteract the effects of the severe weather. On the 24th, they moved along Wolf Creek, all the time the temperature being below zero. The same occurred on the 25th. On the 26th, the Canadian River

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was reached, and Major Elliot was sent on a prospecting tour, while he crossed the river with his immediate command. The ice was not strong enough to bear them up, so they had to break through it in fording the river. After crossing, Scout Corbin brought news that Elliot had struck a trail on the south side of the river. This he was sent orders to follow until night, and then to wait for Custer and his men. Leaving the wagon train behind him under an escort, abandoning some and taking their pack train of mules, a hundred rounds of ammunition and commissary stores of one day's rations of coffee and hardtack, and some forage for his horses, he hastened on. Troop after troop was relieved at the front for breaking the road, and the horses were pushed to the limit of their condition of safety, as the Indians, if they were in as large a number as believed, might ambush Elliot and his men. They reached Elliot at nine o'clock, camping on a small stream, and building fires for cooking in the thick timber, which concealed them, having some deep ravines; the command was somewhat refreshed. A council was called, and it was decided to wait until the moon rose, and then to follow the Indian trail. The rest did the command some good, the saddle-girths being loosened, and the horses given their scanty supply. With an able disposition of the scouts in advance, Custer led

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his men, and, in about an hour's ride, Little Beaver approached and said that he smelt fire. A halt, and Custer and the scouts went forward, crawled up over the ridge, saw a little fire smouldering, which the scout said had been used by those guarding the ponies. The main camp was at no great distance. Extra precautions of silence were enjoined, and, with cat-like caution, the regiment followed until about one o'clock, when the advance reported the enemy in front. Half a mile away was seen by those acute eyes what they knew to be a herd of ponies, and even the distant barking of the dogs could be heard. Custer and the scouts surveyed the situation and came back to the command. Only whispers were allowed, and even stamping of the feet was forbidden. While waiting, some of the men slept leaning against their horses; some slept on the snow, wrapped in their overcoats and blankets, waiting for the command. The reader can imagine the intensity of feeling that existed among those engaged in this adventure, as at this kind of a game it was terribly true that the white man had not always been successful. Custer relates that in a whispered conversation with my old partner, "California Joe," on asking him: "Joe, what do you think of the chances?" (in those days the rude kitchen articles were carved out of horns), Joe's reply was:

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"Well, by gosh, General, we'll make a spoon or spile a horn." The time was ripe, the men were aroused, girths were tightened, and whispered commands were given. Cook's sharpshooters dismounted and advanced. The regiment was divided into four squadrons. Major Elliot was to go around on the left and get in the rear of the camp; Thompson, on the right, was to connect with Elliot; Captain Myers on the right, and Thompson on the left, with Custer and four troops in what would be the center. Hoping for no discovery by the foe, Custer was to gauge the time necessary and give the signal to attack with the bugle. About an hour before dawn, Captain Myers' troop took up the last and nearest position. A moment before the General was about to order the charge sounded, a rifle-shot signal was heard from one of the Indian guards in the camp, and Custer's bugle sounded. Three echoes came from three different directions, the cavalry charged, and with cheers the fracas opened. Jumping from their lodges, hiding behind trees, or lining the bank of the little stream, that acted as a rifle-pit, the reds fought desperately. Captain Hamilton was killed; Captain Barnitz fell mortally wounded, with a bullet just under his heart, and here and there others fell, while an effective fire mowed down the surprised Indians. Scattering in bands, they succeeded in making a

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hot fight for over an hour. Seventeen were in one protected depression in the ground, who fought on until they were all killed. A band of about forty, in a ravine, peppered away heroically, until all were sent to the happy hunting grounds. Black Kettle himself was killed, besides one hundred and three of his warriors. The village was captured; the pony herds were shot, as they could not be carried away, taking an hour to kill eight hundred and seventy-five of them. The village and all its possessions of winter provisions, including a thousand buffalo robes, hundreds of pounds of dried meat, etc., were destroyed. Over five hundred pounds of powder and one thousand pounds of lead were at the same time captured. Fifty-three squaws and children were made prisoners, thus entirely destroying Black Kettle and his band. Besides those officers mentioned, there were five of our men killed and eleven wounded. Elliot and his party of fourteen, who had followed some flying parties, were missing, having run into a larger band of Indians in a large adjoining village, which threatened now to rush on the command and give tit-for-tat; but Custer rallied every man, threw out skirmishing parties, and advanced with his bands and bugles playing, and, after some sharp fighting, the Indians, believing that he must have reinforcements, and seeing Major Bell with an escort

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coming dashing with a load of ammunition, which, by the way, was badly needed, and having Little Rock, their fighting chief, killed, they broke away and scattered. An unknown number were killed and wounded during the all-day fighting. A white woman and child were found in the village, who were killed by the Indians for revenge during the opening of the fight. Owing to the condition of the weather, etc., it was necessary to get back to Camp Supply to recuperate, which was successfully accomplished. That same winter, Custer repeated the same trick on a larger village and wiped it from the face of the earth and captured Satanta, whom he held until many white captives were given up in exchange. After some rest following the battle of the Washita, a search party was sent out to find trace of Elliot and his men, whose remains they found, the story being afterward learned from the Indians how catastrophe overcame them. Flushed with success in the Black Kettle village, Elliot pursued the flying band and ran into the midst of a big band of braves coming to assist in the fight. They were seen, an ambush was quickly effected, and they were surrounded. Their horses were shot down and others dismounted, and they stood back to back till all died gallantly fighting. When found, none had less than two bullet wounds, and Sergeant Kennedy no fewer than

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twenty. Their mutilated remains were filled with arrows. Thus success teetered back and forth between the white man and the red, showing the need of caution to offset cunning.

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CHAPTER XVIII

GENERAL "SANDY" FORSYTH'S FIGHT ON THE REPUBLICAN—SCOUT JACK STILWELL'S HEROISM

Gen. George A. Forsyth.

DESIRING to do justice to the memory of some of the scouts who were my almost constant companions in the days of my life upon the plains, and who achieved distinction for their remarkable work, I will relate some stories about Jack Stilwell. Of all the scouts reared in the Far West during Indian uprisings, Jack Stilwell died with the record of having performed one of the most heroic actions known in the annals of Indian warfare on the American frontier. He died but a few years ago, and, before his death, had been a county judge of Oklahoma, and afterward went with me to Wyoming, where he died. His wit and philosophical remarks are still a matter of comment out West.

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As an example, they tell a story of a hot debate between Stilwell and another plainsman about seeing a cyclone. The other fellow said he had seen a cyclone while riding alone upon the plains. Stilwell insisted that he didn't, for the reason that it took two men to see a cyclone, one to say "Gee whiz, here it comes!" and the other to say "Christianny, there she goes!" It is one of my pleasantest memories to recall that as my guest during the World's Fair, and later in New York, he first beheld the wonders of civilization, of which he knew so little, as well as the vasty deep, which typified a side of nature to which he was an utter stranger. His greatest feat of heroism was in accomplishing the rescue of General George A. Forsyth, who, in September, 1868, was besieged by Indians. General Forsyth was in command of a body of about fifty plainsmen, enlisted as scouts, and camped beside the Arickaree River, a small stream in Northwestern Kansas. The Indians had been reported as uprising, and the expedition was projected for the purpose of finding out the true state of affairs. It being a season when very little water was in the river, the party removed its camp to an island in the middle of the stream. There their worst fears were early realized, for, at nine o'clock on the morning of September 17, 1868, Chief Roman Nose entered the river valley with

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his braves, squaws and children, and prepared for an attack. Roman Nose was an heroic specimen of the Indian warrior, and he headed a party of nearly a thousand hostile braves. General Forsyth immediately began making the best preparations he could with a view to fortifying his position, digging rifle-pits and placing saddles and other available material in a circle around his men. There was so little water in the river-bed that he knew hand-to-hand encounters would result from the impending attack, unless the advancing host could be repelled before they reached the imperiled soldiers. Back in the valley, in full view of the Forsyth party, Chief Roman Nose addressed his warriors. The low bluffs surrounding the scene were fairly alive with the wives and children of the united tribes, numbering easily into the thousands, and their wild cries of rage and encouragement were added to the war-whoops of the fighting forces. Stirred to strong emotion by the impassioned words of their war-chief, the Indians swept toward their prey with horses at full gallop. Roman Nose led the column, decked in his gaudy-feathered war-bonnet, and clad only in a crimson sash, knotted about his waist, swinging his rifle above his head, and uttering unearthly yells of defiance to fate and encouragement to his braves. Indian sharpshooters, ranged in hiding along both banks of

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the stream, began pouring into the Forsyth position a deadly fire at close range. The besieged men crouched in the rifle-pits they had dug in the sand, their firearms in readiness, awaiting the word of command. Closer came the cavalcade of redskins, until their fellow-sharpshooters were compelled to cease firing for fear of killing their own men. Then Forsyth shouted: "Now!" and a crash of musketry rang from fifty guns. It was apparent that the Indians were bent upon riding down their prey and killing them on the spot. The first volley made no change in their intentions. At a second volley, they did not waver, but when others followed, too rapidly to count, the ranks began to thin out, and, at last, Roman Nose went down, shot dead from his horse. The death of their defiant leader sent consternation into the ranks of his followers, and when they were within a hundred yards of the miniature fort they broke and scattered in a panic. Forsyth's men now rose in their rifle-pits and poured a volley into the depleted ranks of the retreating foe and dropped again just in time to escape the bullets of the sharpshooters still lurking in ambush.

During the next two hours, the Forsyth party dug their rifle-pits deeper, strengthened their barricades with the bodies of their destroyed horses, and protected themselves as best they

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could against a second attack. At two o'clock, the Indians were again driven off, and for a third time they returned at four o'clock, to be once more and finally repulsed. The Forsyth party suffered severely in all three of the attacks. All their horses and mules had been killed, thus cutting off their means of escape. Lieutenant Fred Beecher, a nephew of Henry Ward Beecher, the distinguished Brooklyn divine, with five of his men, had also been killed or mortally wounded, and seventeen men, including General Forsyth, had been seriously wounded. Practically, only seven men out of the original number were unharmed. Everybody knew that the Indian tactics would result in a siege, in the hope of starving them out, or picking them off, one by one, by sharpshooting from cover. Fort Wallace, the nearest military post, was one hundred miles away, and the situation was indeed desperate for General Forsyth and his men, without food, and surrounded by nearly a thousand Indians. The dead horses were cut into strips for food, and a well, inside the circular breastworks, was dug for water. The defense was further strengthened as best it could be, and, ever-watchful, they passed four days with no sign from the Indians save an occasional shot when a scout indiscreetly rose to stretch himself. On the second day, the horse-meat could not be eaten. Suffering became

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intense, and sending for help was absolutely necessary, else the command would perish. Jack Stilwell, a beardless youth in buckskin, volunteered to go to Fort Wallace. Old "Pete" Trudeau, a frontiersman, said he would go with him. At midnight the pair crept out from the breastworks and were quickly lost sight of. Stilwell decided that the best route to take would be by going directly ashore and over the bluff, and not to detour up or down the river or follow the ravines into the interior, for he judged that the Indians would guard these seemingly less perilous avenues, feeling that no one would take a chance of escaping over the bluff. Crawling on their stomachs, and sometimes on their hands and knees, three miles were covered before dawn. They saw Indians on every hand. The first stage of their long journey brought them to the top of the divide between the Arickaree and South Republican rivers. There they concealed themselves for the day in a wash-out, or head of a draw, where the banks had been overgrown with tall grass and sunflowers. From over the hill they could hear firing all day, which told them that their comrades still held out. When darkness came, they again started south, seeing on the road two parties of Indians, which delayed them greatly; and when daylight came they found themselves about half a mile from the

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Sioux and Cheyenne village, which was the headquarters of the Indians, who were still attacking their comrades on the little island fortress. That day they spent in the tall grass of a kind of bayou, where they lay in the water all day without moving. Indians passed very near, and once some warriors stopped not fifty feet away from them to water their horses. That night they crept away across the south fork of the Republican, and the morning of the fourth day found them on the prairie at the head of Goose Creek. The Indians seemed to have been left behind, and the boy and man decided now to travel also by day. This piece of recklessness nearly cost them their lives, for about eight o'clock in the morning they saw Indians coming toward them, and they dropped into the grass. Fortunately, the Indians had not discovered them, but it was necessary to hide quickly. In looking for a place to conceal themselves on the open plains they discovered some weeds growing around a buffalo carcass. Crawling to their prospective shelter, they found that the buffalo had been killed about a year before and that the skeleton was intact, with little bits of hide hanging to the ribs in places. In a moment they had crawled into the skeleton with its almost unbearable stench; but they could not come out, for the mounted Indian scouts approached very near several times during

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the day and scanned the country in all directions for more than an hour at a time. While one of these scouts was sitting his horse not fifty yards off, Stilwell and Trudeau made the unwelcome discovery that a rattlesnake had made the carcass his home, and now began crawling around. They could not move a hand to kill him for fear of the noise attracting the Indian spy, so the snake was allowed to "stay on the job" until, with a luckily directed mouthful of tobacco spit Stilwell struck him on the head and he crawled away. The tenseness of their situation, coupled with the dangers at hand, began to affect Trudeau's mind, and he almost broke down completely. He wanted to shout, shoot his revolver, and leap out from their hiding place, but Stilwell persuaded him to remain quiet until dark, when a refreshing drink of water revived him, and they traveled on through the night. The next day was foggy and they traveled by daylight without trouble. About eleven o'clock, when almost utterly exhausted, they saw coming out of the haze of the Denver wagon road two soldiers bearing dispatches. The couriers were on the way to Colonel Carpenter's command, lying at Lake Slater, about fifty miles from where General Forsyth was besieged. Spurring their horses, they made all haste to Colonel Carpenter's camp, and his force was quickly marched to General Forsyth's relief.

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CHAPTER XIX

CAMPAIGNING IN WINTER

Through a Blizzard.

A COUNTRY of such vast expanse, unsettled, save for a few forts as places of refuge and succor — so comparatively few in number as to be, as it were, like pebbles on the seashore—rendered the campaign in winter, with the blizzard conditions, not only hazardous and dangerous, but, even if successfully combated, attended by excruciating suffering. This the old army officers and soldiers of the early campaigns will never forget—the physical discomforts and mental worrying with climatic conditions far excelling those that defeated Napoleon in his winter campaign in the region about Moscow. The old army officer, soldier, scout and guide look now upon future

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campaigning, with these conditions obviated, no matter how strenuous, as almost a picnic in comparison with what they were. In fact, I conscientiously believe that there is not, or ever has been, a writer who can adequately depict a more lonely, solemn, funereal occupation than these winter campaigns then were, the extreme physical discomforts and dangers making the roar of battle, with its hazardous perils and risks of death, practically a relief from the monotony of the march, the night-watch, the night-guard, and the camp duties of the march—extremely arduous under such conditions.

I relate two or three examples. On one occasion I was out with some of the Fifth Cavalry, under the command of Lieutenant Bache (a descendant of Benjamin Franklin and a member of a well-known Philadelphia family), and, by the way, a magnificent young officer, who in various campaigns showed a bravery and dash that one would not associate with his aristocratic bearing and extreme gentility. A blizzard arose. Fortunately, we were near shelter, in the shape of some bluffs and scattered wood. When the blizzard was over, it was necessary for us to strike out on the path of duty. The thermometer was away below zero, and the wind cutting and sharp. On coming back from the lead to consult with Lieutenant Bache, I passed by him to

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caution the sergeants to look out for their men from the cold and see that they did not become drowsy, and on my return I found indications of numbness and drowsiness even in the case of the Lieutenant. I aroused him, and appealed to him to pull himself together, but he was just in the humor to resent it. In consequence, I had to take the law into my own hands and shake him up in lively style, first taking the precaution of slipping his revolver and placing it out of his reach. As he did not respond to my efforts on the horse, I simply dismounted, pulled him from the horse, and used him in what one would think a rather rude and rough manner. In fact, I had to make a punching-bag and football out of him, much to the astonishment of some of the young troopers, who came up and were going to avenge my apparent discourtesy to their officer, though some of the older men explained its necessity. Eventually I got the Lieutenant on his feet, and, while our horses were being taken care of, an old sergeant and myself hustled him along on a little foot-race until we got his blood in circulation and so, overcoming the danger, we eventually arrived safely at the fort.

On another occasion, when out with General Eugene A. Carr, with whom I consulted, and who, by the way, was one of the best posted and equipped Indian fighters and frontiersmen on

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the roster of the army, we both concluded that on account of the peculiar balmy condition of the weather a blizzard would be the next thing in order. So we resolved to strike camp early, as we were then in a bleak country and over fifty miles from wood and water. This wood and water was in a lower country, where there was only one gap which would furnish descent into the valley, and that had to be reached by careful attention to direction.

Starting early and getting the point of the wind, we had not gone far before old Boreas began his revels. General Carr, of course, gave orders to the commanding officers of companies in regard to preventing drowsiness of the men, and to quirt them in the case of any of them succumbing to the cold. I shall long remember that trip, for it was necessary for me to go by the wind and not flinch from it, for in the blinding blizzard we would all soon be lost. The direction brought the wind against my left ear, and as the storm soon became so blinding that even a black horse could not be seen ten feet from the picket-ropes, lariat lines were scattered along to guide the men, who kept so close almost as to touch each horse's tail. But I dared not change my position for fear of losing the direction, so for eight hours I held my left cheek and ear against the storm, and, of course, suffered greatly from frost-

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bite. I dared not dismount, as did many of the others, General Carr himself walking nearly all the distance, leading his horse. I had stuffed my ear with a piece of saddle blanket, but, notwithstanding that, the ear-drum was frozen, and for a time it gave me intense pain and suffering; and up to the present day it has quite affected my hearing on that side. But by this pertinacity we reached the gap; and when I had made the point successfully, and the descent down into the cañon became assured, there were never fifteen hundred men who let out such yells and peans of joy. We were soon down into the valley, and the old dead timber was soon crackling in a hundred bonfires, and the axes were trimming old trees and cutting up new ones; and in a sheltered space our safety added to the good feeling, and joy reigned supreme.

On another occasion, I had a very trying experience when General Penrose's command had been sent to reconnoiter the surrounding country by General Sheridan, and were known to have been somewhere in a blizzard. Not hearing from them for several days, we knew they were up against it; but as all trails were covered and obliterated by the drifting snow, it was a serious problem to find them. General Carr, of course, consulted with me in the matter, and he relates the incident in detail in *Carr's Campaigns,* of my

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success in finding the men. In this instance, knowing in what direction they had gone, I had to travel fifteen miles to find a ridge that they would cross and that the storm would blow the snow away from and leave bare. Following this ridge for five miles or more, I found the trail of their horses and wagons where they had crossed, and by the hoof-tracks located the direction in which they had gone. I succeeded in reaching them, snowed in and in a terrible condition, for everything had been eaten up to such an extent that the horses and mules had eaten the manes and tails off each other. Returning the next day, relief was sent and the commands became reunited.

As late as in the winter of 1892, the day after the two days' battle of Wounded Knee and the Mission at Pine Ridge, in the Ghost Dance War, a terrific blizzard arose, the thermometer running from twenty to thirty or forty degrees below zero. Although the conditions were much improved from the very old times, the army endured great hardship. General Brooke's command, for instance, left on an important mission, in columns of four, with the soldiers in Government special-preserved buffalo overcoats. A person could hardly see the fourth man across the line. Twenty-seven horses were frozen on the picket lines, and one officer was found dead in

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his tent, while nipped noses and ears and chilblains prevailed. One young officer, sent out on a detail, endured extreme suffering, eventually having his arm amputated; and the dead bodies of some of the men were not found until the snow melted in the following spring. If memory serves me right, it was Lieutenant Piper, who has since been connected in an official capacity with the New York Police Department, who suffered so severely.

Volumes could be filled with the experience in the olden times of these blizzards, that even now wreak havoc in the fully settled sections, and one can hardly estimate my feelings when I am traveling in a Pullman palace car, with all the luxuries of modern travel, and contrast them with the painful journeys of years ago over the same territory. It is then that I feel somewhat as Dick Whittington did when he contrasted his boy's bare-foot pilgrimage to London with all the gorgeous trappings and luxuries at his disposition as Lord Mayor.

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CHAPTER XX

THE FIGHT AT ELEPHANT ROCK

General Carr.

AMONG the many army officers under whom I have served, one of my earliest experiences was with Major-General Eugene A. Carr, retired. General Carr was a graduate of West Point when cabins were more plentiful than frame-houses in upper New York State, whence he came. Graduating in 1850, he went to the frontier and graduated in that old school that made him one of the best of Indian fighters, and where he acquired all the qualities of a trained frontiersman and scout. He was wounded with an Indian arrow in the Indian campaign as far back as 1854. He was one of the best equipped frontier officers when the Civil War broke out, and became prominent in some of its most active campaigns, often commanding a

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division, and receiving the distinction of a Congressional medal for his wonderful record on the firing line. He has been wounded four times. He was in the saddle and held a prominent command in the last Indian war of 1891-92. He is now living in Washington, D. C.

In 1868, I first met him when I was a scout for Colonel Royal's command, whom he succeeded. It has been the pride of my career that, he being an officer of such wide experience and ability, I secured his esteem and friendship; and in his writings he has been very generous in alluding to my services. I had the honor of serving with him in many trying campaigns, notably in that which culminated in his success over Tall Bull, who had long been the terror of the plains with what is known as the "dog soldiers," who were renegades recruited from a dozen disappointed tribes, and were composed of the most vicious, fanatical Indians who were opposed to the white man's intrusion in the West. The depredations were of a terrifying nature, and Carr was delegated to punish them at all hazards. Their continuous pursuit for many months was a very trying one, as they employed the Indian's methods of annoyance in attack by safely scattering when hard-pressed. Knowing that only strategic cunning could eventually effect subjugation or dispersal, General Carr

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proved by his persistent energy and strategy that he was equal to the situation. It was during the continuous pursuit of these warriors that I met one of my closest calls in an incidental fight which occurred at a point called "Elephant Rock." It was in the spring of 1869 that we reached Elephant Rock, which is a point on a rock on the south side of Beaver Valley, where I found an Indian trail going down the Beaver; and following it, the command went into camp. The General ordered Lieutenant Ward to follow it, I being already on the scene. I was keeping the Indians in sight while covering my presence from them, when, somewhat to the left, almost parallel with them, I heard firing, and I afterward ascertained that Lieutenant Ward was in a skirmish so premature that at one time it threatened to cut me off. General Carr left the command under Major Brown to follow with the wagons, and the Indians, skirmishing with great daring, put up a game fight. General Carr followed them until nearly dark, and returned to meet and protect the wagons. Forming his men in a hollow square, he made an orderly retreat, the Indians showing great pertinacity in their skirmish tactics, so much so that the General got a bullet through the scabbard of his saber. Meeting the wagons and getting into a good position, he went into camp; but the Indians stayed around all

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night, emitting the cries of owls and coyotes, as usual. Next day the Indians were followed, and skirmishing was kept up incessantly. Lieutenant Schenofsky, on that occasion, came near being ambushed, and had a few men killed. This continuous skirmishing was kept up for three days, with myself almost continuously in the saddle; and while we were in front, the General sounded the officers' call for consultation. I will permit General Carr to tell the story of an affair in which he punished the Indians severely, while the story relates also to my connection with the matter:

"I had heard some firing in front where the advance-guard had gone out of sight. My orders were for the advance-guard to regulate on the main column, and always to keep in sight of it; but as Major Babcock and Lieutenant W. P. Hall (now General Hall) were so ambitious and anxious for a fight, I thought I would give them a chance, and so I let them alone. After hasty consultation regarding lack of supplies, I sent the bugler to recall the advance-guard. He came back saying he could not reach them, as they were surrounded by Indians. The Indians had got into four ravines, which headed near the trail, two on each side; the half-dozen had led the advance on with insulting gestures and defiant words; some could speak and swear in English;

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and when they came between the ravines, the whole poured out around them. Babcock dismounted his men and formed them in a circle and stood the Indians off. I sent Lieutenant Brady with the next company to open communications, and the Indians, supposing the whole command was coming, went on as before. Reaching the scene, we could see the Indians scattering in retreat. A figure with apparently a red cap rose slowly on the hill. For an instant it puzzled me, as it wore a buckskin and had long hair; but on seeing the horse I recognized that it was Cody's Powder Face, and saw that it was 'Buffalo Bill,' without his broad-brimmed sombrero. On closer inspection, I saw that his head was swathed in a bloody handkerchief, which served not only as a temporary bandage, but as a chapeau—his hat having been shot off, the bullet plowing his scalp badly for about five inches. It had ridged along the bone, and was bleeding profusely—a very close call, but a lucky escape. However, it would not do to turn back immediately after such impudence, so I took to the gallop and ran them for twelve miles to and across the Republican and up the bluffs on the south side, where they acted in their usual aggravating style, by scattering in every direction after dropping a good deal of plunder. We could see them on the distant hill, but could not catch them under the circum-

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stances, or without means of some counter-strategic cunning, so we went back and camped north of the Republican. The advance-guard had been relieved, and the Indians severely punished, with a loss on our side of but four or five killed and a few wounded; this with Babcock's horse wounded and Cody's narrow escape as the resulting casualties. The object of the campaign was nearly accomplished, but our greatest need was supplies, which the hot trail had side-tracked, in the excitement of the necessary pursuit of the defiant foe. As the country was infested with Indians, and it was fifty miles to the nearest supply point, Fort Kearny, on consultation with Cody he decided that it would be best to undertake the job himself, a point characteristic of him, as he never shirked duty or faltered in emergencies. I gave him the best horse in the outfit, and, when twilight arrived, he decided, after patching up his head a little, to bring relief and meet us at a point 'northwest on the Platte River, about a day's march onward.' These were about the most definite directions any scout got in the trackless wastes of those days, and it showed the peculiar sixth sense or acumen possessed by experienced officers, and why practical scouts, like Cody, in the wide terrestrial seas of the great plains, rarely ever missed connections. Cody, therefore, reached us safely, making a success-

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ful ride of fifty miles during the night, and arriving at Fort Kearny at daylight. He had chased and fought Indians all day, been wounded, superintended the loading of supplies, and when, through his rare frontier instinct, he reached us, he had been almost constantly in the saddle for forty hours. Pretty strenuous work that!"

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CHAPTER XXI

BATTLE OF SUMMIT SPRINGS

Tall Bull.

JUNE 18, 1869, under General Eugene A. Carr, saw us again hunting for the band of "dog soldiers," who were, like the Irishman's flea, here, there and at times everywhere — disappearing and suddenly turning up and making things lively, besides acting with an audacity that was extremely aggravating, now and then wounding some of the guards, from which many casualties were the result. They were so cunning that it seemed difficult to get them into a corner where we could have a first-class scrap. Sometimes, on a quiet moonlight night, after not being visible for half a day, they would turn up, and bang! bang! it would come all around the camp, creating a scurrying of the officers to their commands and of

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THE DEATH OF TALL BULL AT THE BATTLE OF SUMMIT SPRINGS, JULY 11TH, 1869.

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the men to defend the camp. Sometimes they would endeavor to dive through a herd of horses, shaking robes and yelling. In the section of the country in which we were following them, the sand was soft and the animals and wagons sank into it several inches.

We had with us my old friend, Major Frank North, the "White Chief of the Pawnees," with some of his Pawnee scouts, who rendered good service. Colonel Royal, who had been out with us, had been viciously attacked, about fifty of the warriors following him back almost into the main command. The trail continued up Frenchman's Fork, and water was so scarce that we had to dig in the sand to scoop some up.

Nebraska, Colorado and Kansas were all excited over the depredations of these renegades. They had murdered right and left, had captured several hundred mules and horses, and destroyed wagon trains, as we could tell by the trail of some shod animals. What intensified our desire to punish or capture them was the fact that they had some white captives—Mrs. Alderdice, whose husband and children they had killed, and Mrs. Weigel, whose husband and family had also been massacred, and these two women were known to be still alive and with them. In fact, they had almost arrested the settlement of the country, as the story of their deeds drove

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back the pioneers. At last we got on their trail, and had almost daily skirmishes, and General Carr decided to use some stratagem to see if we could not get them in a tight place. He consulted with me, and, after a day of continual skirmishing and a night attack, he ordered a retrograde movement, which created a good deal of discussion between the officers and men at the time. Apparently abandoning the pursuit, he retired as if going back to the fort; and in two or three days, as he surmised, the Indians were nowhere to be seen, having come to the conclusion that we were disheartened and that they could with impunity take a little repose themselves. This was exactly what our wily commander desired, as he intended to retrace his steps and catch them sleeping. So, being sure that there were no Indians in sight, he packed all the grub possible on the mules, burned the wagons and impedimenta, and immediately started to make forced marches in their direction.

As I had surmised, they were heading for Summit Springs, a few miles south of the Platte River, and among the sand-hills, which formed a beautiful little oasis, as it were, for a camp-ground. Striking their trail by judging from their daily camp-fires, we made in one day the same distance that they made in three; but when near the Springs, as we saw the trail getting

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fresher, we covered four of their day's journeyings, with all their impedimenta and village outfit, in one day, and landed at the opportune moment ready for business, while the enemy had been thrown off their guard and gave us an opening that resulted so gloriously that this battle is recognized as having been one of the most effective in the early breaking of the power of the red man on the plains. Three legislatures passed resolutions of thanks, and Nebraska presented a sword to General Carr. On this occasion, I had the distinction of adding another chief's warbonnet to my trophies, and I consider it proper that the reader shall have a short discussion of the action in my gallant commander's own words, as taken from his writing, *Carr's Campaigns:*

"On Sunday, July 11, 1869, I was thinking of going to the river to water my horses, when 'Buffalo Bill' came back and said: 'I have seen the village. It is over a ridge, away from the river valley.' We had not seen the trail for some time. They had followed an old custom of trailing along the ridge where we had dismounted to cross it, and going over the high ground, so that any one following them would be visible from camp. Cody's idea was to get around, beyond, and between them and the river. He changed horses quickly and went on, and I took

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to the gallop for several miles through the deep sand and got to the top of a sand-hill or mound. Some Pawnees, away off to the left on the bluff, beckoned me, and I went. The Pawnees pointed over the ridge and said: 'Hoss, hoss.' I saw what looked like a band of ponies, but said: 'No, buffalo.' They said: 'No, no; hoss, hoss.' They took my glasses and looked and said: 'Yes, hoss.' I looked, and, sure enough, they were ponies grazing, and the camp, no doubt, was below. I permitted the Pawnees, as was their custom, to strip and take off their saddles and all their uniforms, but to keep on their drawers, so as to be recognized as friendly. I had sent word to Colonel Royal, and he sent up Major Walker's company and came on with the rest. I placed the Pawnees on the left and two companies of the Fifth Cavalry in the center, and one of Captain Price's on the right. I told Major Eugene Crittenden to take command of the center, and I would take the reserve and send up reenforcements as required.

"When we all got started, I told the bugler behind me to sound 'the charge.' He put his trumpet to his mouth, but no sound came out. I asked him why he did not sound the charge, and he said, 'I—I disremember it, sir'; but it came to him directly, and he sounded it while all were going at full speed; and we were among the

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enemy before they had any idea that we were within a thousand miles. Then I heard the rattling of rifles on the right and left, plainly distinguishing the basso sound of 'Buffalo Bill's' trusty rifle, old 'Lucretia Borgia.' Then occurred a most intense half hour, redolent with the excitement of battle—the conflict can never be properly described by the participants, and I can only say that the surprise was a grand success, while the charge was brilliant.

" 'Buffalo Bill' got pretty well around the village when he went in on Captain Price's right. As he advanced, he saw a chief on a horse charging about and haranguing his men. He and his party laid for him, and, as he came nearer, 'Buffalo Bill' shot him off his horse and got the animal. This was the celebrated race-horse, 'Tall Bull,' which he, Cody, rode for a long time, and with it won many exciting races. When he came into camp, Mrs. Tall Bull said that it was her husband's horse, leaving no doubt about the fact that 'Buffalo Bill' had killed the chief.

"On this occasion, the Indians had two white captives, Mrs. Alderdice, of Missouri, whom they killed during the fight, and Mrs. Weigel, of Kansas, who had been shot in the back with a pistol bullet, which broke a rib, but was deflected, and passed around and lodged below her left breast. Fifteen hundred dollars in gold, silver and green-

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backs, which was gathered in the camps, was given her, and she went back, remarried and 'proved up' her claim. Next morning, we dug a grave on a hill above the village and buried Mrs. Alderdice, the surgeon reading the service.

"After the fight, I entertained the chief's wife and family at tea and learned that the chief was named Tonka Haska, 'Tall Bull.' He had three wives, but only the middle one was with him, a fine-looking squaw, the daughter of a chief, with her little girl of eight years. When they were surprised, he tried to get away with them, but he looked back and saw the destruction of his band, which was his pride, and said: 'My heart is bad; I cannot endure this. I will turn back and get killed. You escape, and treat the white woman well, and she will intercede for you when peace comes.' He turned back, firing as he charged, and by Cody's unerring rifle she saw him fall.

"I detailed a board of officers to count the dead Indians, and, notwithstanding that it is their custom to carry away the wounded and to hide or bury the dead, we found sixty-eight dead bodies on the field."

Thus ended a long and wearisome pursuit, the ending being a thrilling affair to the soul of a soldier—an ample recompense for days and nights of hardship and toil, that can only be com-

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prehended by those who participated in the indescribable thrill of victory.

Here is a newspaper account of this affair, from the New York *Herald,* of July 20, 1869:

"GENERAL CARR'S VICTORY—THE INDIANS PUNISHED SEVERELY

"St. Louis, July 19, 1869.

"Omaha despatches state that General Augur returned from Fort Sedgwick this morning. General Carr's victory is more complete than at first reported. Over 400 horses and mules were captured, with a large quantity of powder, and nearly five tons of dried buffalo meat. Among the killed was the noted chief, Standing (Tall) Bull, killed by Cody, chief of scouts. About $1,500 was found in camp, which was given to Mrs. Weigel, a white woman who was recaptured. This was the same body of Indians that last year had fought General Forsyth and had recently committed depredations in Kansas."

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CHAPTER XXII

WINGING TWO AT A TIME—CAPTURING THE HERD AND THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL

General Emery.

As CHIEF of scouts under General Phil Sheridan, I and the men were resting at Fort McPherson after a hazardous expedition and a long and successful chase. The rest was well deserved; officers and men were congratulated, and I was honorably mentioned for good conduct in the last expedition. It was a quiet June evening, and we were enjoying the refreshing breezes. A detail had left the fort to water the Government herd of horses and mules in the nearby Platte River, when shots were heard. Every one was on his feet in a moment, for it was learned that a party of Sioux Indians had dashed from the cottonwood trees, shooting, shouting and waving blankets, and

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had stampeded a herd of about four hundred animals. The Indians had killed two of the herders and wounded another. Some of the herd ran for the corral, where they were accustomed to go for the night, but the Indians got away with about two hundred and started for the bluffs south of the fort. All was excitement, but, as was my custom, I had my war-horse, "Old Buckskin Joe," near at hand, and was mounted in time to make a reconnoissance and note the direction in which the Indians had disappeared with the Government stock. General Wm. H. Emery (father of Admiral Emery, now with Evans' fleet), who was in command, had had his bugler sound "boots and saddles," and by the time I returned for instructions five troops of cavalry were busy saddling up, getting their arms, ammunition, and some supplies. One company, "I," Fifth United States Cavalry, were the first troops saddled and ready for the chase. Their officer, a young lieutenant by the name of Earl D. Thomas, now Brigadier-General Thomas and in command of the Department of Colorado, was just out from West Point, full of ambition, and delighted to be in command in the absence of his superiors. General Emery and myself agreed on the necessity of quick action, and to the delight of young Thomas he was ordered with his troop to follow me, while the other

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troops, as soon as ready, would follow, more completely equipped, and support us and try to recapture the animals. By this time the Indians, with such of the herd as did not escape them, were at least five miles away in the hills.

"Fours right! Trot! Gallop!" And we dashed off. We followed at a gallop until dark, but did not get a sight of the Indians, and the tracks showed that they were whooping it up on the run. A halt was called to give the puffing horses a rest, and Thomas consulted me. His orders were to follow and recapture the animals. He was worried, as the men had no supper, no rations and no water, while the Indians had taken to the sand-hills, where it was thirty miles to water. I told Thomas I could follow the trail at night if necessary, and awaited his answer. "I will follow you, Mr. Cody, as I was told to do so, and I will go wherever you propose." After a short rest, "Mount and forward!" was the order, and the chase was continued. During the night, the Indians repeatedly doubled on their trail. They would drive the herd in a circle and zig-zag and return, and use every means known to a crafty Indian to throw any one who might be following off the scent. Several times during the night it took some time to get the trail straightened out, without useless exhaustion to the main body. While I was accomplishing this,

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the troops would get some little rest; although the Indians in doubling their tracks delayed somewhat, it retarded us more and was very provoking. We did not reach the head of Medicine Creek, where we got water for men and horses, until eleven o'clock the next day. As the horses were drinking and nibbling a few mouthfuls of grass, and the men were snatching a few minutes' sleep, we consulted on the situation. The trail showed that the Indians were headed southwest, in the direction of Red Willow Springs. Knowing that there was no water between Medicine Creek and the Red Willow, I was sure that the Indians would make a stop there, as it was many miles from there to the next water. Deciding that it was best to keep continuously on the job, and that the Indians must make some stop to rest and eat, we could overlap them. When the horses were rested, and as we had nothing on hand to eat to delay us, and had had nothing since dinner the day before, our best possibility for a meal was to overtake the Indians, surprise them, whip them, and capture what dried meat they had. The young lieutenant was full of grit, and the men of the Fifth Cavalry were soldiers to the core and had followed me through these dry sand-hills on many a scout, and, though it was a hard proposition, none demurred. As we left the green grass that bordered the creek,

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I listened for a complaint, but there was not a word. Grim, silent, hungry, but like sleuth-hounds, they were hot for the trail, and were ready to starve, to thirst, if the prospects of a fight were good. American soldiers of the Indian-fighter type were proud to be in Sheridan's cavalry.

After leaving the creek, the Indians began their old tricks in trying to hide their trail by devices well known to me, but I paid no attention to this, knowing what must be their next stopping-place, and I was as familiar with that part of the country as they were. Straight on we kept to the springs, except that occasionally we went out of the direct line to keep in low places between the sand-hills so as not to be seen. At nine o'clock that night we halted four miles from the springs. Advising Thomas to allow the men to unsaddle and unbridle, letting each second man hold two horses by their halters, and so let them feed on the grass, by changing the men every two hours they could get some sleep. I disguised myself as an Indian and started off to locate the hostiles and be back in time so as to attack them at daylight. No fires were to be lighted, and all were to be silent until my return. Before I left, half of the tired men of the little band were slumbering. One hour later, I had seen the camp, just as I expected, in

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fancied repose, believing that we could not be within a day's march of them.

The Indians' ponies and our stolen herd were corraled, some grazing and some sleeping, with Indian sentinels on the lookout. I came near running into an Indian scout, who was sitting on a sand-hill peering into the night to signal the approaching danger; but as I was afoot and crawling through the thick bunch-grass, I escaped notice. Crawling back until I could hoof it on the run, I found the boys as I had left them. Quietly they were called to saddle up, instructions were given, men were detailed to pay particular attention to recapturing and rounding up the herd, and others were instructed as to the attack on the camp. I estimated the Indians to number about thirty, and there were forty-two of us. Ten were to creep up to the sleeping Indians on foot and be ready to work in open order. Twenty, besides the Lieutenant and myself, were to charge on horseback. The rest were to bring up the remaining horses, attack the herders, and round up the entire herd. We attacked at break of day, and the whole scheme worked well. The tired lot were surprised when awakened to meet their foes. Nine of them were sent to sleep forever. Many had kept their war-horses near them, which hastily mounting they escaped with several picked horses from our band. Among them

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was one of my favorite war-horses, "Powder Face," which one of them, who probably knew him, had appropriated for his own use. As soon as the fight was over, and I saw that we had captured some of their herd as well as our own, I saw that "Powder Face" was not with them, but I recognized him half a mile away, his rider heading for the hills. This made me hot, and, knowing that the Indians would think others were following me, I dashed after them. "Old Buckskin Joe" soon began to gain, and I got near enough for a shot. My first shot killed the horse that an Indian was riding alongside of "Powder Face," and his rider was soon up behind in the usual manner they try to save a warrior, riding backward, shooting at me with his revolver. "Powder Face" was as swift as "Joe." Being in the rough sand-hills and having a double weight to carry, "Joe" in a few minutes got me near enough for a good shot. I kept closing on them, as I did not want to hit my old friend "Powder Face." When I thought it sure, as they were riding up over a mound, I fired. The Indians fell, the one bullet going through both; and when "Powder Face" heard my voice he ran toward me whinnying, and with two of the boys who had been ordered to follow close behind me by the Lieutenant, we returned to the camp in high glee. They found a lot of dried buffalo and deer meat and

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some fresh antelope and deer, with accompanying pepper and salt, and copious drafts of spring water, so a few minutes' rejoicing was had. A detail was quickly made up to bury the dead, and as we had but three slightly wounded, and five horses knocked out, the enthusiasm can hardly be described. Wishing Lieutenant Thomas and his brave boys to get their full share of glory, and, knowing the country well, I took more direct routes back to the fort. Sending a half-breed scout to inform the main supporting body, that we knew would be following us, of the recapture of the herd, we reached the fort the next evening much fatigued, but very joyful.

The Lieutenant and his men were complimented by special order. I, myself, received "mention," and a short while after I was made the recipient of a "Congressional medal of honor."

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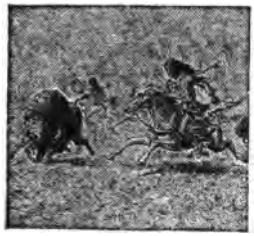
CHAPTER XXIII

HUNTING, HISTORY'S GRANDEST CHASE—THE GRAND DUKE ALEXIS' HUNT

General Phil Sheridan, General Custer and Sioux Indians, under the Auspices of the United States Government.



Indians Hunting Buffaloes.

SPEAKING of General Custer reminds me of an international episode resulting from the friendship exhibited by Russia to the Government of the United States during the Civil War—the courtesies shown to the young Grand Duke Alexis. Among the events arranged in the programme was his visit to the Far West, to hunt for big game. The whole affair was under the direction of General Phil Sheridan; and Custer, from his youth, distinction and suitability, was particularly selected to chaperon and have charge of the Grand Duke, and at the same time show him the

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COSTUME WORN BY "BUFFALO BILL" AT THE TIME OF THE GREAT HUNT FOR THE GRAND DUKE ALEXIS.

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horsemanship and admirable qualities of the American army officer. I had been ordered by General Sheridan to take charge of the matter and have everything in readiness for the Grand Duke and a large number of noblemen and officers of his staff. I had located a camp sixty miles from North Platte, on the Red Willow, in the heart of the buffalo country. Lieutenant E. M. Hayes, now Brigadier-General, retired, a dashing soldier, more familiarly known as General "Jack" Hayes, was assigned the duty of arranging the material and equipping the camp. There was no limit to the efforts to provide every luxury and comfort that lavish expense could procure. Provisions, wines, etc., of the finest had been freighted in from Chicago, tents for the royal guests were beautifully furnished with carpets, rugs, robes, and with a stove in each tent. It certainly was a most beautiful camp, named Camp Alexis, and Lieutenant Hayes must have been inspired by some of the Oriental tales of kingly camps in days of old, and tried to "go it one better." Runners had been sent out and conferences had been held arranging for an assured peace meeting with Spotted Tail and other powerful chiefs to attend and give zest to the sport. I quote from the despatches of the day to the press (from the New York *Herald*), relative to the same:

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"Some forty-odd superior wall tents were properly equipped for the guests alone. The arrangements of the camp, in brief, were complete, not to say luxurious, when the remote and wild section of the country is considered. Besides the cavalry escort, there were two mounted companies to guard safely the Imperial tourists and sportsmen from the wrath and revenge of the numerous 'dog soldiers,' Indians under Chief Whistler. The chances are, however, that the reds will unite in rendering the Duke's visit one of pleasure, rather than one of fear or harm. Sheridan and 'Buffalo Bill' have persuaded them to such a course, and, furthermore, to procure their good behavior, the General has brought out thirty wagon-loads of provisions, which he has promised to distribute impartially among the red men at the end of the hunt, if they restrain themselves from any violence. These presents assure such result. This perhaps may be considered a questionable way to secure a foreign guest from scalping or murder in the United States; but when it is known that the Indians are armed and outnumber the soldiers ten to one, it will be admitted that Sheridan's 'tickle me and I will tickle you' policy is the only safe one to pursue. From fifteen hundred to two thousand Indians are expected."

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The arrival in North Platte is thus described in despatches of January 3, 1872:

"The Duke alighted from the train, the natives of the little station formed in line along the platform, and, almost involuntarily, simultaneously removed their hats, in honor of the distinguished visitor. 'Little Phil' was master of ceremonies, and he was bound that not a moment should be lost in starting for the camp, sixty miles distant. He arranged with 'Buffalo Bill' to be on hand and act as guide, and the renowned scout was promptly on time and in all his element. He was seated on a spanking charger, and, with his long hair and spangled buckskin suit, appeared as the feared and beloved by all for miles around.

"White men and barbarous Indians are alike moved by his presence, none of them daring to do aught, in word or deed, contrary to his rules of law and civilization. After the ducal party had alighted, General Sheridan beckoned the famous scout to approach. He advanced carelessly, yet respectfully. 'Your Highness,' said the General, 'this is Mr. Cody, otherwise and universally known as "Buffalo Bill." Bill, this is the Grand Duke.'

" 'I am glad to see you,' said the hero of the plains. 'You have come out here, so the General tells me, to shoot some buffalo?'

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" 'Yes,' answered Alexis; 'and I hope to have a good, fine time. I heard of you before, and I am glad to meet you here.'

" 'Thank you, thank you,' said Bill, with a smile as honest as that of a maiden. 'If the weather holds good, we'll have one of the finest hunts that there ever was on the continent.'

" 'Buffalo Bill' is the famous Western scout employed by Sheridan for Indian service, and one who is efficient and reliable. Bill is about thirty years of age, is about six feet in height, and, with other proportions, he has a pleasing face and fine address, and would have been prominent in other walks of life had not circumstances made him famous as a Western hunter.

"The tales that are told of 'Buffalo Bill's' hunting experiences since he was old enough to ride a horse—for Bill was born and brought up on the plains—are truly wonderful to hear, related as they are around our blazing campfires and in the presence of all of the paraphernalia of frontier life upon the plains. Bill was dressed in a buckskin suit of trimmed fur, and wore a black slouch hat, his long hair hanging in ringlets down his shoulders.

"As he dashed from the railroad station, he was closely followed by the Grand Duke in an open Concord wagon, drawn by four powerful horses, which carried the distinguished represen-

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tatives of two powerful nations, escorted by the cavalry, at a fearful rate of speed over the rugged prairie."

Of course there was a glorious time in camp, in fact, "high jinks," as far as the natural military discipline, the dignified and courteous qualities and manners governing both guests and hosts permitted. After a day of rest following the sixty-mile ride, and a night of social exchanges, my scouts and Indian allies reported the presence of a herd of buffalo. We gave a first run in which General Custer, myself, and many officers gave an exhibition to our guests of the manner and method of hunting buffalo, showing, and explaining also, the necessity of trained horses used to the job, and the method of shooting, either through the loins or under the heart. The Grand Duke eventually mounted probably the best buffalo-hunting horse that ever lived, "Buckskin Joe," and soon adapted himself to the sport. General Custer, especially, gave a magnificent exhibition of skill, dash and expertness. He and myself accompanied the Grand Duke, and the latter acquitted himself splendidly. We cut out, eventually, two or three of the finest horned buffalo, colossal in size, which he brought down. The magnificent heads I secured, sent them by express to Chicago to the taxidermist, and they now

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ornament the royal castles in St. Petersburg. During the hunt, elk, antelope, deer and coyote heads were treated in the same way and sent home as trophies. Photographs were taken of the camp and some of the scenes, and it is to be regretted that photography had not been sufficiently perfected then to get what would be a sensational connection of the men, the horses, the buffalo, and the guns in action. But the grand battue, or round-up, was reserved for the last, which was an Indian hunt for buffalo. Camp scenes and Indian war-dances, pow-wows and feasts, proved of interest to the royal guests, who expressed delight at all they saw. General Custer gave some practical military drills and evolutions as accompanying exhibits, and, in the social education, they received practical instructions as well in the game of poker. But of the Indian round-up of buffalo, I might say that such a picturesque assemblage; such natural conditions, when nature furnished in its primitiveness the striking adjunct of an illimitable hunting-ground and innumerable varieties of big game; magnificent savage allies, in all the rainbow brilliancy of their native garb and fantastic adornment, mingled with the flower of the veteran cavalry of "Uncle Sam" commanded by General Phil Sheridan, General E. O. C. Ord, commander of the Department of the Platte, with the gallant Custer,

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Colonel Mike Sheridan, the Forsyths, Assistant Surgeon M. V. Ash, Major Sweitzer, Colonel Palmer and Lieutenant Hayes, a brilliant array of famed officers, and the gorgeously accoutred foreign officials, admirals and generals, and a detachment of the flower of our army, made a pageant so spirited as to linger in memory as a scene in every respect unique beyond compare up to date, and one well-nigh impossible in the future to duplicate. I had located an immense herd of buffalo, and all arrangements were complete, "the blanket was waved three times," and off the outfit started at daylight. The Indians were painted in a variety of colors, had discarded all their artistic adornments, different-colored ornaments, jewelry, feathers and other apparel, and looked like real children of nature, almost in Adam's costume. Only a breech-clout around their loins, moccasins on their feet, no saddle, no bridle, the ponies with only a thin leather hackamore between their teeth. Some with only light bow and arrows, others with their rifle, revolver, ammunition; no unnecessary weight—so that they could ride like lightning. They even spared their horses, and walked most of the time, but with such speed that it kept every one "hopping" to go the pace. This lick kept up until the herd was in sight. A council was held and the calumet was passed around, and everything was ready,

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while every Indian mounted his horse, which seemed more excited than his rider. About two hundred were in the front line, a hundred and fifty in the second line, and a hundred composed the rear. The chiefs were in the front, snapping their whips in the air and holding the riders together, with the ponies foaming, prancing, and stamping their feet, impatient as their masters, each seeming to form one soul and one body—centaurs—all waiting for the signal, all with one feeling, one desire, to gain as many laurels as possible when the chief suddenly gave the signal to go. Thunder and lightning! What a tornado! What a storm of horsemen, as, with impetuosity, these nomads dashed on their prey! With the roar of Niagara, the speed of a cyclone, the swiftness of an avalanche, these strange figures threw themselves in a mad, wild rush on their fleeing victims, and soon in the midst of the dust-cloud one could only see an indescribable mix-up of flying arrows, accompanied with rifle shots, galloping horses, falling buffaloes, and fleet-riding Indians on their wild ponies. It was a confusion in one sense and regulated action in another—forming almost a delirium of delight to the huntsmen. Some went flying from one end of the prairie to the other after stragglers, while the main guard formed in such a manner as to make the buffalo circle. The signal to halt was

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given, and as the dust-cloud rose, little by little, like a curtain in the theater, the horses were seen at a standstill and the prairie was strewn with the buffaloes that fell. Calm and practical fellows were these Indians. Even the horses began quietly pasturing on the grasses, while the hunters proceeded to pull off the hide and cut out the tongues and favorite pieces of their native cattle, and preparing the meat in strips for preservation.

During the progress of the hunt the Grand Duke expressed a desire to have a test made as to the use of the bow and arrow of the Indians. "Two Lance," with a reputation as a buffalo-hunting chief, was selected for the purpose. While riding at full speed he shot an arrow from his bow which pierced a buffalo clean through from side to side. The Grand Duke considered the feat so remarkable that he took the arrow home with him as a memento of the occasion.

The commissary wagons assisted in bringing fresh meat to camp, and great festivities marked the closing of this grand hunt. Guests and hosts had tasted of one of the most glorious feasts that ever true Nimrods attended. Sheridan was delighted, everybody was congratulated and the picture still lingers in my mind with young General Custer predominating the grand assemblage. He was the life and spirit, one might say, of the oc-

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casion, and to me it is sad to think of another picture that depends almost alone on imagination and of which "more anon"—that of Custer's last battle.

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CHAPTER XXIV

SIOUX AND CHEYENNE CAMPAIGN OF 1876 AND CAUSE—GENERAL RENO'S CONNECTION WITH THE LITTLE BIG HORN

ANY series of stories of Indian war would be incomplete without giving an account of the campaign of 1876 against the Northern Sioux and their allies from the South, the Sioux and Cheyennes, an affair known as the Custer campaign. The catastrophe that overwhelmed the gallant General Custer and his brave command was an episode that will live forever in Indian history. In the summer of 1874, General Sheridan sent two expeditions into what was known as the Northern Country. He sent General Custer with the Seventh Cavalry from Fort Abraham Lincoln to scout in the north and northwest of the Black Hills, and to return through

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the Black Hills back to his post. At the same time, he sent Colonel Anson Mills from the Department of the Platte, leaving the Union Pacific Railroad at Rawlins, Wyo., on an expedition to scout the Sweet Water country, the Big Horn Basin and Big Horn Mountain country, and to return by way of the Powder River country, back to his department. I was sent to guide Colonel Anson Mills' expedition. The two commands, one under Custer and one under Mills, came within communicating distance in Eastern Wyoming, on the Powder River, the two commanding officers and scouts meeting and holding a consultation. This country was then comparatively unknown, except to the scouts, hunters and trappers.

This may appear singular to a younger generation, but the Government had just announced the segregation of what is known as the Yellowstone National Park, whose wonders were just becoming to be known, the whole country being, as it were, a terra incognito and looked upon by the Indians of all the tribes of the Sioux nation as their most sacred possession—the physical phenomena, the hot springs, spouting geysers, weird canyons and warm, sulphurous springs, whose medical virtues and curative powers they knew and made use of; in fact, they almost looked upon it as the home of Manitou, their

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God. Colonel Mills marched from Rawlins to Independence Rock, on the Sweetwater River, where he made a supply camp and left his wagons. General Custer continued on through the Black Hills, exploring it in every hole and corner, and then returned to Fort Abraham Lincoln. This meeting of the two commanders was the last time I ever saw the General. It was on Custer's expedition through the Black Hills that the old-timers' assertions of its wealth in gold were confirmed and practically demonstrated. Therefore, although the Government's intention was to keep out invaders of this section (many of the first being arrested by the military), the efforts were a failure, for the rush became so great as to render it impracticable to arrest it, as the white man's desire was to add this wealth to his other possessions. This brought about irritation on the part of the Indians. During '75 and '76, the whole Dakota nation, the most powerful Indians and their allies, listened to the harangues of Sitting Bull and other medicine men to prepare to go on the war-path, to gather their best horses, and secure all the ammunition and long-range rifles they could. This was rendered possible by the profitable trade in furs and money to the Canadian-French traders on the north. This was a factor in the fight on the Little Big Horn, as many of their rifles outranged the army carbine.

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General Sheridan, in view of the situation and the gathering of warriors in the northwest, commenced massing the United States troops in the different departments adjacent. General Alfred Terry, who was in command of the Department of Dakota and the station at Fort Snelling, was to send the troops in his department to Fort Abraham Lincoln, to take the field from there under the command of General George A. Custer. General John Gibbon, who was in command of the Department of Montana, was to take command of the troops in his department, move down the Yellowstone and form a junction with them. General George A. Crook, in command of the Department of the Platte, was ordered to take the troops from his department and proceed north by the way of Fort Laramie, Fort Fetterman, old Fort Reno, old Fort Phil Kearny. This latter command was the one I accompanied. It might be mentioned here that, during the preparations, certain scandals in the construction department of the Government, both for army and Indian supplies, had attracted Congressional attention and national interest, threatening to besmirch personages closely connected with the powers existing. The investigation coming on, Custer was ordered to Washington to give testimony. This testimony adhered so strictly to the truth that it brought him into disfavor, and when

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BUCKING BRONCHOS ON BUFFALO BILL'S RANCH, WYOMING.

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he returned to his post he found that the command of the main expedition was taken from him, and that he was assigned to his own regiment simply; while General Terry was ordered to take supreme command. To a soldier with his record, to a man of his sensitiveness, this humiliation was deeply felt, and, no doubt, was one of the many causes that warped his judgment at a time when it was most needed. General Terry showed his sympathy and confidence in him after the Indian trail was discovered, when he ordered him to take his regiment, with ten days' rations, ammunition, and private scouts, along with Charlie Reynolds, Bloody Knife and others, and take the trail and follow it. He struck the trail and followed it at a rapid pace on the 23d and 24th of July. At this point, the trail left the Rosebud and headed toward the Little Big Horn. As the march had been very rapid, the horses were tired, and camp was made; while preparations to start by two o'clock in the morning to cross the divide which separated the two streams was determined on.

The men cooked their suppers, cleaned their guns, and had issued to them more ammunition from the pack-train which he had with him, all feeling that on the morrow the gallant old Seventh Cavalry would be hand-to-hand with their old enemy. Just about this time, the guidon which was standing in front of the General's tent

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blew down, and instead of falling toward the enemy, it fell from the enemy. The soldier, like the sailor, being more or less superstitious, called that a bad omen, and there was many a chat around the camp-fire that evening in regard to the falling of the guidon. And many a man who never saw the setting of the next sun rightfully predicted that he was going into his last fight, which, alas, proved all too true.

At two o'clock the regiment was again on the move, with the scouts ahead, and by daylight they had crossed the ridge. The command was keeping in the ravine, or canyons, out of sight, and moving as quietly as possible. The scouts in advance came back and reported to General Custer that they had seen tepees, or Indian lodges, which was true; but, as it afterward turned out, the tepees which the scouts had seen were three or four tepees that had been put up for smallpox patients away from the main Indian village.

General Custer divided his command into three parts, taking five companies himself, Major Reno with five companies, and Colonel Benteen with two companies, to bring up the rear with the pack-train. Major Reno was ordered to march straight on to the Little Big Horn, while Custer would move obliquely off to the right, making a detour of some seven or eight miles, and striking the Little Big Horn at what he supposed

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would be the lower end of the Indian village; while Reno was to strike it from the upper end. Custer was to work up the river and Reno down, while Reno was to keep on coming down the river until he joined with Custer; and Benteen was to follow up with the pack-train.

As near as we know, Reno struck the Indians a little before Custer did, and, of course, he, as well as Custer, was surprised at the immense size of the village. There were ten times more Indians in this village than was indicated by the Indian trail which they had been following up the Rosebud. It is a fact that the Indians whom they were following had just at this point and at this time joined the main band of Indians in camp on the Little Big Horn. The principal chiefs among the Indians, of course, were Sitting Bull, Gall, Crazy Horse, Rain-in-the-Face, Little Big Man, Grass, and many others.

At first, the Indians were taken completely by surprise, for they were so numerous that they had failed to keep scouts out at the usual distance, and Reno's attack was the first that they saw of the soldiers. Reno, instead of charging, held back when he saw the immense numbers in front —his heart, indeed, failed him; and abandoning audacity, which is the true motto of the cavalryman, though he failed to recognize it at this time, he dismounted to fight on foot. In his first

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charge he was repulsed, and, as near as I have been able to learn, it was only a weak one, not on account of his officers or men, but it was the lack of faith and confidence in himself that took away the vim and dash that the charge should have had.

Reno, in looking over the situation, preferred defense in preference to attack, and instead of hurling these three hundred eager fighting men at the heart of the foe, winning by dash and discipline against odds, he hesitated, lingered, and delayed. He recrossed the Little Big Horn and took up a position on a hill, and he dilly-dallied around there until the Indians, taking courage at his apparent weakness, made the fight on him all the fiercer, and most of the men that he lost were lost while crossing the Little Big Horn in retreat, so as to get into the bluffs on the east side.

Among the killed was Lieutenant McIntosh, who was killed while trying to rally his men just as they left the timber; Dr. De Wolf, who, in desperation, stopped his horse and kept firing until shot dead; and Lieutenant Hodson, whose horse was shot and in falling broke Hodson's leg, notwithstanding the efforts of Sergeant Criswell, who bravely stood by him, endeavoring to pull him on to his own horse, when a second bullet struck him in the head, killing him instantly.

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Three officers were killed, besides twenty-nine men and scouts, while seven men were badly wounded, including Lieutenant De Rudio, and fifteen men were missing. Reno, although having a good Civil War record, through his indecision in the emergency on this occasion seemed to have completely lost soldierly intelligence. The Indians, as was afterwards learned, were completely taken by surprise, and the great war-chief, Gall, personally directed the attack on Reno and was making preparations to surround him on the hill, evidently unaware of Custer's proximity on the other side of the village. This shows what could have been done had Reno charged onward and kept this greatest of the war-chiefs occupied, instead of thus permitting him to leave a few men to threaten Reno, while he concentrated his warriors on the other side of the village against Custer. A messenger to Benteen from Custer, ordering him to "come on quick and bring the packs," had caused that gallant officer to hasten; but overtaking Reno, who outranked him, he was ordered to join his demoralized forces, and was compelled to obey. The latter thought that the two commands combined, which numbered four hundred men, would soon take measures to get into action. But the appeals of such officers as Benteen, Weir, French and others to lead on were without avail.

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It is perhaps harsh to criticize; but when one thinks that two solid volleys were heard in the distance, which was a signal evidently from Custer for help, if the impatient and gallant officers and brave men had been led on to do or die, what might not have been accomplished! Both attacks having been in the nature of a surprise, and as the Indian is as susceptible as any one to be puzzled, what different results might have occurred if the bugle blasts on all sides had rung out as correctly and as dutifully as they did at the battle of the Washita!

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CHAPTER XXV

CUSTER'S LAST BATTLE

THE last seen of Custer, as he started into the ever-to-be-remembered battle of the Little Big Horn, was when he went over the ridge and waved his hat in salute to the other commands. Custer, making a wide detour to fall on the rear of the village, or what he thought was the rear, immediately struck a very strong band of Indians, for by this time Chief Gall had been informed of his presence, and, although it was a surprise to the Indians, Gall had hastened with reënforcements to that point and sent word to Crazy Horse and his men from the upper end of the village to assist the combined attack on Custer.

They crossed the river at a point where they were concealed by a large ravine and got on

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Custer's flank, and so astute had been Chief Gall's arrangements that he found himself attacked in front and on all sides. Custer's first charge was successful until he saw the immensity of the village. He saw that it was a city instead of a village. There being a high hill a half mile back from the Little Big Horn, Custer decided to take this as a standpoint. He sounded the recall and tried to make this hill. He had to turn his back while doing so. The Indians are never so brave as when they get any one's back to them. On their retreat to the hill, half of his men were killed. The rest took up positions, but the Indians, being so elated at killing so many of his men from the Little Big Horn up to the hill, and the failure of Reno to attract the Indians continually by coming down the Little Big Horn, almost all the fighting Indians concentrated on Custer and fought him to death.

Fighting desperately to gain a point higher up, no doubt, he was, however, compelled to dismount his men and act on the defensive. Unable to advance or retreat, and probably unwilling to do so, he must have based his actions on the diversion that the other commands would make. Steadfastly believing this, from later Indian accounts, they fought coolly, hoping and expecting for reinforcements which never came, but succeeded in keeping up the fight for some

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time. The Indians, well-armed and in overwhelming numbers, circling and riding at speed, kept up a continuous and effective fire, while skirmishers and marksmen crawled through the grass, picking off officers. In the meanwhile, Reno was still lying on the hill, although they could hear the reports of firearms below, and notwithstanding that Benteen, Weir, French and others continued their appeals, and that the echoing volleys cried for assistance, he remained there until all was silent—the Indians eventually killing Custer and every one of his gallant band. Reno was kept annoyed by the savages until the arrival of General Terry and Gibbon's command, while, on the second day, the Indians set fire to the grasses, to cover their movements with smoke, and drew off. Afterward, a visit to the battle-scene told the story of Custer's last battle, showing that every one had at least done his duty, and, though defeated, were not disgraced. They all died in the proper military formation, every officer at his post, and every man in line. Custer's body was found, and although all the others were mutilated or scalped, his body seemed to have been untouched, except by his death-wounds, this being a tribute from the savage foe to his courage and gallantry. His brother, Captain Tom, and his brother-in-law, Captain Calhoun, with a nephew, were among the slain, making an un-

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usual family affliction. The bodies of all the officers were found, with the exception of Dr. Lord, Lieutenants Porter, Harrington, and Sturgis, and some ten men. The latter's fate has never been known—whether they were captured and tortured, or whether their bodies had been thrown into the quicksands near the bed of the Little Big Horn, it is not clear, the only certainty being that they were dead. Two hundred and twelve bodies were buried on the hill, the losses to the regiment being, in two days, two hundred and sixty-five killed and fifty-two wounded, fifty per cent. of the command!

Lieutenant (now Major) De Rudio, since retired and living in California, who was among the missing on the Reno side, having had his horse killed under him, found his way back to the command. He and a private, O'Neil, for two days and three nights were hid on the field of battle, in ravines and in the creek, passing through a most horrible experience, that, in itself, makes a thrilling story.

Of course there will always be discussions, *pro* and *con.*, as regards attention to orders and violating injunctions from the commanding officer. It stands to reason that in a country where there are no telegraph or telephone lines, and conditions being only known to the one that is present, the peculiar style in warfare that the rules of

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civilized war enjoin could not be strictly adhered to. General Custer had had experience, and had been quite successful on the plains, and as one of the most aggravating methods of warfare that the Indians possessed was that of scattering in all directions and escaping, to meet at some designated point, army officers were generally more fearful of a failure to bring on an engagement, lest the enemy should escape, than they were of the dangers of battle. I think this animated General Custer's actions, believing that Reno would go the limit and that together they could at least sting the enemy, and that, if not a decisive victory, which, of course, he never doubted, he would be able to accomplish a partial victory, even at some loss. Of course, without being critical, I think a little more scouting should have been done at a distance around the village, to ascertain if there were no more trails than the one they followed. General Terry told me himself that when he sent General Custer on the trail he knew he was sending an experienced Indian-fighter, and that as he might be many miles away, even a hundred, when he discovered the hostiles, he would have to use his own discretion and his own judgment in regard to an attack. He naturally did not expect that when in front of such a wily enemy he would have to ask for orders "what to

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do." The officer in charge was responsible for his own actions then.

Of course, if he should succeed, and victory perched upon his banners, all would be well; but even if a little divergence from orders occurred, if he did not succeed, why, of course, criticism generally followed.

General George A. Custer showed his belief as an experienced man in his judgment of the occasion, and, in failing, paid the debt in a fate that such a heroic soldier as he fears not to meet, though Reno did.

The story of his life from graduation from the U. S. Military Academy, through the Civil War, is a striking one for all time to the future young American. I will quote here a tribute to his memory that is strikingly effective: "The schooling of the military academy at West Point, combined with the grand experience of actual war in the unequaled modern contest (that between the North and South from '61 to '65), left him a past-master in the art, and, with his great commander, General Phil Sheridan, his name has been coupled co-equally with Murat and Prince Rupert in impetuosity; with the dash, but discretion, of Hannibal's 'Thunderbolt' Mage; Saladin, the leader of those 'hurricanes of horse' that swept the Crusaders from Palestine; Crom-

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well, Seydlitz or Zieten—all perfect generals of horse."

Custer's fight on the Little Big Horn bears some resemblance to the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava. Both will live in song and story as emblematic of the soldierly qualities of the Anglo-Saxon. Still there was some difference: one was a combat between enemies of but slight difference in degree of civilization and its rules of warfare; the other was a fierce struggle with a savage foe, whose victory meant not one but a thousand deaths to the vanquished. Some returned from the Valley of Death, but in the Custer fight not a soldier escaped. Leonidas and his band fought no more desperately than did he and his gallant men, but

"Thermopylæ had its messenger of death—
Custer's last battle had none."

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CHAPTER XXVI

LIEUTENANT SIBLEY'S SCOUT

Major Sibley.

So MUCH depended on good scouting and good scouts that I think some of the adventures of small scouting parties were even more thrilling, and are surely more remarkable, in their demands on the intuition of the guides, than are the big battles they lead up to, and in which culminate their results. Among the able scouts I have known and worked with, and who have worked under me, were Frank Gruard and Baptiste Pourier. Gruard was by some supposed to have come when he was a child from one of the Pacific islands, as he had the dark skin and features of those people, his folks joining some emigrants who were massacred by the Indians. His life was spared, and it is known that at one time he was a Sioux Indian,

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to all intents and purposes, and wore the breechclout. Meeting some hunters and trappers, their language recalled his childhood, and he either figured out or learned sufficient to impel him to desert the red man and join the whites. His knowledge of the Sioux, Cheyenne and Crow languages, and, of course, great proficiency in the universal sign language, and the knowledge of the country he acquired while living with the Indians, made him a very desirable acquisition to the service, especially in the north, and among the foothills. Baptiste Pourier was of French trapper and voyageur lineage, mixed with Indian blood—a class of people who in time of peace traded with, lived and married into, some of the most savage tribes, but who in war-time were the first that had to take to the tall timber.

He was known as "Big Bat," in counter distinction to another Baptiste (no relation), a very brave and skilful man, and from his stature known as "Little Bat." All three of these figured in the last Sioux campaign, known as the "Ghost Dance War." "Big Bat" had a range stallion that made a record as having killed the first Indian in the campaign that ended the life of Sitting Bull and finished with the battle of Wounded Knee. Range horses have the same peculiar ties as their ancestors, the wild horse.

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That is, the equine sultan gathers to himself a harem which he overlooks and guards with the greatest care and intense jealousy. "Big Bat," at the opening of hostilities, had joined the military, and the Indians made preparations to utilize his horses. So one of the first movements, in rounding up cattle and stock, was to make a descent on "Big Bat's" outfit. The head pasha of the different equine herds was a magnificent animal and had been christened, on account of his position as champion and his pugnacity, as "John L. Sullivan." Once when the Indians, in rounding up the stock, a brave, called Little Panther, in the run lassoed "John L.'s" favorite mare. Hackamoring her mouth, he and his comrades made off; but "Sullivan," seeing them from the hills, immediately dashed to the rescue. Rushing through the bands, and escaping some stray bullets, caring, indeed, for nothing, he chased the fugitives and reached their side. The Indian fired at him and missed; "Sullivan" with open mouth crushed his arm, pulled him from his steed, stamped him to death, and escaped with his bride.

"Big Bat" and Frank Gruard were the two scouts that guided Lieutenant Sibley (now Major in the Twelfth Cavalry, stationed at Fort Des Moines, Ia.), himself a young officer of experience and ability, on a scouting party with

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BREAKING HORSES ON BUFFALO BILL'S RANCH IN WYOMING.

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about thirty soldiers, and a newspaper man well known to everybody, Mr. John Finerty, now of the Chicago *Irish Citizen,* but then journalistic representative of the Chicago *Times.* When the scouting party was arranged for by General Crook, young Finerty, a magnificent specimen of a man and of athletic build, joined it and on the trip proved himself to be possessed of not only endurance, but grit. He made application to be permitted to accompany the party, and in his desire to write up and secure some items, his ambition and devotion to duty gave him an experience that I suppose even now at times haunts the spirit of his dreams. It was, indeed, a blood-curdling experience, and one that made Sibley, the scouts, and Finerty. These men will be remembered as having passed through all the emotions that can be aroused in a person who faces what at times looks like certain death. They were so situated that to hope to escape was idiocy, and that, outside of death in battle, there were only two alternatives in case of danger of capture—suicide, or a certainty of horrible torture. General Crook reluctantly granted the request of Finerty. Lieutenant Bourke asked for the style of epitaph he desired, and another officer said: "If you cannot bring the last report, nail it to a tree, with details up to the last moment"; while Captain Wells quietly said: "Orderly, bring Mr. Fin-

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erty a hundred rounds of troop 'E' ammunition." Well, they started, and at eight o'clock that night they left their first halting-place, Big Goose Creek, and in the silent moonlight night had one of those quiet phantom promenades. About three o'clock they took a rest till sunrise, about fifty miles from their base, and then close to the Little Big Horn River. Gruard chose ground concealing them from observation. Gruard, judging the section rightly, dismounted, looked cautiously over the crest, called Baptiste, and peering excitedly from around the rocks, they soon rolled down the bluffs, mounted their ponies, announced the presence of a war-party, meanwhile ordering his men to "Be quick, and follow me for your lives." Still keeping under cover, he led them over rocky ledges, and they sometimes had to lead their horses and leap down six or seven feet until they reached a bluff large enough to conceal them all. The scouts and Sibley and Finerty crawled up among the rocks, and, with their glasses, soon confirmed their worst fears. The party was large in number and in full war-paint and costume.

Suddenly one of their scouts halted, examined the ground, and began to ride in a circle and make signals. Gruard knew that they were discovered, and that there was only one chance—to lead the horses into the mountains and prepare

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for the worst. Sibley told the boys "they were in for it," that all must do and die, and off they struck out for the first ridge of the mountains, a section that Gruard, fortunately, was familiar with. An exhausting ride compelled a halt for a short rest, when John Becker, the packer, announced "The Indians! The Indians are coming!" followed by some shots that wounded two or three horses. Finerty's horse, struck by a bullet, stumbled, but recovered and bore him to safety with the others. Gruard wisely led them to comparative safety, or, in other words, "back to the woods!" Soon they were located in the thick timber, the horses tied to the trees, and plenty of strewn logs and fallen timber for breastworks. The Indians repeatedly circled around and charged, but with little loss, as Sibley cautioned economy in ammunition and deliberation in fire. Singularly, none of the men were wounded, although the horses began to suffer. The Indians knew that they had them, if they could put them afoot. The number of Indians began to increase and they made a very vigorous charge, in which they lost White Antelope, a Cheyenne chief of great warrior fame. This dampened their ardor, but they kept up an incessant distant firing that rattled against the pine trees like hail-stones on a barn. An early morning rain had dampened the grass, and, as it was drying, Gruard knew

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that they would soon start fires and make a holocaust of them, so they decided that they must leave their horses and saddles, each man pack up some grub and ammunition, and climb the snowy mountains as a last resort. With Becker to lead ahead, the two scouts and Sibley remained to keep up a desultory fire and then follow. They struggled up the precipitous side of the mountain until Gruard, Sibley and Pourier joined them and scrambled up after them, and then took the lead. They marched, stumbled, climbed and fell over impediments that would have been impossible to have overcome in other than sheer necessity. Thus continued a night of horror, until absolute fatigue and exhaustion brought them to a standstill. They had escaped from one danger, but they were now in the trackless mountains, with fifty miles of rock, forest and plain between them and succor; and as everything superfluous had been left behind, save ammunition, rifles, and a little grub, they were scantily clad. The thermometer fell several degrees, a terrible wind raged, and a hail-storm chilled them to the marrow, as they huddled under projecting rocks, while below, in the distant valley, the heavens were illuminated by the fires the Indians had started to roast them out. They escaped massacre and burning probably to freeze to death. This necessitated moving to keep from freezing. Thus

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the day was spent, straggling along, the strong helping the weak, scaling along gigantic walls, with paths only a foot wide, and an abyss of five hundred feet below and sheer walls of rock high above them. At last they gained a point in the mountains about twenty-five miles distant from Crook's command. Halting, they had some sleep in a sheltered cave, which gave temporary respite to the fatigued and stricken men. When it was decided to strike down into the valley, to get their only refreshment, water, they climbed up into the hills again barely in time to miss being observed by a strong war-party. Their appearance was accepted as the final catastrophe of the trip—their sure annihilation. But as the Indians had not struck their trail, and they hugged close to the ground, there was great rejoicing as the Indians quietly rode away; and all fell asleep, except the scouts, until dark, when the jaded party forded Tongue River up to their armpits, cold as mountain river waters are. Two were unable to cross, and were hid until the future could bring them relief, when it was decided to take chances and strike across the country for General Crook's camp. The rocks had broken their boots, and, with bleeding feet, ragged clothes and many a scar, they eventually saw two cavalrymen of the Second, who were out hunting, but at the same time were themselves un-

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conscious of the danger. Sibley rushed them off to camp for horses, rations and an escort. Sibley's men threw themselves on the ground too exhausted to go another step. In two hours, Captains Dewees and Rawolle of the Second Cavalry arrived with cooked provisions, led horses, and an ambulance, and they soon returned to Camp Cloud Peak, to receive the hospitality of sympathizing comrades. It was a perilous trip, the mental and physical horrors of which description fails to paint and imagination alone can conceive. Gruard and "Big Bat" made a name for their ability, Lieutenant Sibley for his coolness and good sense, and John Finerty proved that journalists will risk anything for duty and the securing of the much coveted news item.

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CHAPTER XXVII

INDIAN CAMPAIGN OF 1876—THE DEATH OF YELLOW HAND

Yellow Hand.

General Phil Sheridan arranged this campaign so that detachments of the army would leave several points, and with various objects to be accomplished, while the eventual objective was to concentrate and corral with a cordon strong enough to crush forever the power of the Northern Sioux and Cheyennes and their allies. Expeditions under Major-General George A. Crook, General Wesley Merritt and Major-General Eugene A. Carr, started from different points, but with active relations, in cutting off the Southern Indians, especially the Ogalalla and Brule Sioux, and the Cheyennes from joining *en masse* with Sitting Bull, or to obstruct and prevent any junction of the Northern Sioux with them, as such junction

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would have given them a strength almost equal to the army, and many times larger than the forces in that section of the country. These three commanders will always stand in the front rank of our most experienced soldiers, both in the Civil and especially in Indian warfare; had graduated at both games, and had on their rosters of officers men destined to become equally famous and successful. Merritt's command worked successfully and had many skirmishes, finally cutting the main body of the Indians off and driving them back to their agency southward, while driving back the Northern Indians coming south. On July 15th, while I was scouting for information, General Merritt ascertained through Paymaster (afterward General) Stanton, that eight hundred hostile Cheyennes, fully equipped for the war-path, had started to join Sitting Bull. These savage horsemen, probably the best in the world, would have a start of sixty miles if Merritt pushed to the agency to make certain of their intention and then pursue them. He did nothing of the kind. As we had been retracing our steps, they felt perfectly secure—so much so, that the White Chief, they thought, could not double on his tracks and cut them off before they reached the timber fringe of the Cheyenne. This they could not imagine for one minute, and Merritt had to plan a ride that would test to the utmost

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KILLING OF YELLOW HAND, JULY 17TH, 1876.

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the possibilities of man and horse, to overcome the advantage they had of him. To discomfit these scientific fighters, he had to ride clear around them in the arc of a circle, while they went in a bee-line, and must do it without being discovered; bring every horse and man to the battle front in good condition, as, with seven companies of cavalry that were available, they outnumbered him two to one, and by leaving the wagon trains and impedimenta behind, men and horses would have short rations. It was an adventurous ride, worthy of extended comment, that by carefulness, occasional spats of rest, the old Indian trail was found. The Indians had not passed yet; and dust-covered and weary, at three a. m. of the 17th of July, the command to unsaddle was given on the banks of Hat Creek across the Indian front, with the Cheyennes in camp not ten miles away. We had outraced and were then ahead of them, having made one of the most remarkable rides in cavalry annals.

We had come seventy-five miles in twenty-four hours, and were ready at daybreak; and the Cheyennes appeared simultaneously. They were an astonished lot of redskins, and here occurred what is known as the battle of War Bonnet Creek. It was in this engagement that fate allotted to me the duty to meet personally and successfully the war-chief, Yellow Hand. A matter of detail that

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I well remember, the chief yelled to me to "Come on! come on! White Long Hair" ("Cooa! cooa! Pe-Ha-He-Has-Ka" in Cheyenne). We both fired simultaneously, my first bullet going through the chief's leg and entering the body of his horse. His bullet glanced on my saddle, and my horse stumbled in a prairie-dog hole, but I landed on my feet. Kneeling quickly, I put a bullet through the head of his horse, coming on at speed. Thus we were both afoot and in close proximity. The story is better told in the press despatches of that day, and by Lieutenant (now General) Charles King, in his book, *Campaigning with Crook*. The dates and arrival of these despatches will show how isolated was the country and the length of time it took to communicate with the East:

THE INDIAN WAR—DETAILS OF COLONEL MERRITT'S CHARGE ON THE CHEYENNES—A SHORT STRUGGLE

The Indians, utterly surprised, rush back in disorder—The latest from General Crook's Army

"FORT LARAMIE, July 22, 1876.

"At noon on Saturday, the 15th inst., the Fifth Cavalry, under General Merritt, were

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bivouacked on Rawhide Creek, eighteen miles from Fort Laramie, to which point they were ordered in from the Cheyenne River, one hundred miles north, en route to join Crook. A courier suddenly appeared from the agency with despatches stating that eight hundred Cheyennes were making preparation to leave for the Northwest to join Sitting Bull; that he was to throw himself across their line of march in time to intercept them, and Merritt had to make eighty miles before they could make thirty; but off he went, and Sunday night found him with seven companies hiding under the bluffs on War Bonnet or Hat Creek, square up to their front.

"At daybreak Monday morning, Lieutenant King, commanding the outposts to the southeast, sent word that the war parties were coming over the ridge from the Reservation. Joining him at the advanced post, General Merritt found the report correct. The command noiselessly mounted and was massed under the bluffs a quarter of a mile to the rear, and out of sight of the Indians.

"At the same time, the wagon train, under Lieutenant W. T. Hall (now Brigadier-General Hall), was some six miles off to the southwest, slowly approaching, and the Indians were closely watching, but keeping concealed from the view of its guard. The two companies of infantry with

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him were riding in the wagons. At six o'clock, the Indians were swarming all along the ridge to the southeast, some three miles away. Suddenly a party of eight or ten warriors came dashing down a ravine that led directly under the hill where Lieutenant King and his six men were watching.

"The object was as suddenly apparent. Two horsemen, unconscious of the proximity of the foe, had ventured out ahead of the train and were making rapidly for the creek. They were couriers with despatches for the command. The Indians, utterly ignorant of the rapid move of the Fifth, were simply bent on 'jumping' the couriers and getting their scalps.

" 'Buffalo Bill,' chief of the scouts, lay on the hill with King, and instantly sprang to his horse down off the hill. 'All keep out of sight,' said the General. 'Mount, now, and when the word is given, off with you!' Then, turning to the officer of the picket, he said: 'Watch them, King. Give the word when you are ready.'

"Crouching behind the little butte, Bill and his party of two scouts and six soldiers were breathlessly waiting; half-way up was the General and his staff. The Lieutenant lay at the crest, watching the rapidly advancing foe. Down they came, nearer and nearer, the sun flashing from their brilliantly painted bodies and their polished or-

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naments. Then, just as they were dashing by the front of the hill, King shouts: 'Now, lads, in with you!'

"General Merritt sprang up to see the attack, just as a tall Indian reeled in his saddle, shot by Corporal Wilkinson, of 'K' Company. An answering bullet whistled by the General's head just when King—still on watch—sung out: 'Here they come by dozens.' The reserve Indians came swarming down the ridge to the rescue. Company 'K' was instantly ordered to the front. But before it appeared from behind the bluff, the Indians, emboldened by the rush of their friends to the rescue, turned savagely on 'Buffalo Bill' and the little party at the outpost.

"The latter sprang from their horses and met the daring charge with a volley. Yellow Hand, a young Cheyenne brave, came foremost, singling Bill as a foeman worthy of his steel. Cody, kneeling and taking deliberate aim, sent a bullet through the chief's leg and into his horse. Down went the two, and, before his friends could reach him, a second shot from Bill's rifle laid the redskin low.

"On came the others, bent on annihilating the little band that opposed them, when, to their amazement, a long blue line popped up in their way, and 'K' Company, with Colonel Mason at its head, dashed at them. Leaving their dead,

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the Cheyennes scattered back helter-skelter for the ridge, but their fire was wild, and their stand a short one. Company after company debouched from behind the bluff, and, utterly disheartened, the Indians rushed for the Reservation, leaving behind all their provisions. General Merritt pursued them until night, when the whole command went into camp at the agency.

"The Indians left their dead, and admit having more wounded. They lost six ponies. Their friends at Red Cloud say they never dreamed that the Fifth Cavalry could get there in time to head them off.

"The regiment sustained no loss. It arrived at Laramie yesterday and leaves for Crook's command to-morrow."

The above is from the New York *Herald,* Sunday, July 23, 1876.

From Captain Charles King's *Campaigning with Crook,* published in 1890:

" 'By Jove, General,' says 'Buffalo Bill,' sliding backward down the hill, 'now's our chance. Let the party mount here out of sight, and we'll cut these fellows off. Come down here, every man of you.'

"Glancing behind me, I saw Cody, Tait, and

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'Chips,' with five cavalrymen, eagerly bending forward in their saddles, grasping carbine and rifle, every eye bent upon me, watching for the signal. Not a man but myself knows how near they are. That's right, close in, you beggars! Ten seconds more and you are on them! A hundred and twenty-five yards—a hundred—ninety —'Now, lads, in with you!'

"There's a rush, a wild, ringing cheer. Then, bang! bang! bang! and, in a cloud of dust, Cody and his men tumble in among them, 'Buffalo Bill' closing on a superbly accoutred warrior. It is the work of a minute; the Indian has fired and missed. Cody's bullet tears through the rider's leg into the pony's heart, and they tumble in a confused heap on the prairie. The Cheyenne struggles to his feet for another shot, but Cody's second bullet hits the mark. It is now close quarters, knife and knife. After a hand-to-hand struggle, Cody wins, and the young chief, Yellow Hand, drops lifeless in his tracks after a hot fight. Baffled and astounded, for once in a lifetime beaten at their own game, their project of joining Sitting Bull nipped in the bud, they take hurried flight. But our chief is satisfied. 'Buffalo Bill' is radiant. His are the honors of the day!"

General Crook, commanding the department, who had started early in spring, was up in the

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north and had fought the same Indians who afterward destroyed General Custer's command.

He fought them in the battle of the Rosebud on the 17th of May. This was a very indecisive contest—practically a severe check to him—compelling him to take up permanent camp on the Big Goose Creek (where Sheridan, Wyoming, now stands) and there await reënforcements.

General Sheridan ordered Generals Merritt and Carr, with the Fifth Cavalry, to make forced marches to join Crook at Goose Creek.

I was with this command as chief of scouts and guide, and we had been operating in Northwestern Nebraska and the southern part of Dakota, to keep the Indians from the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail agencies from going north to join the hostiles under Sitting Bull.

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CHAPTER XXVIII

GENERAL MILES'S NARROW ESCAPE—DEATH OF CRAZY HORSE AND LAME DEER

General Miles.

General Nelson A. Miles had a remarkable career in the Civil War, at the conclusion of which he had risen to the position of Major-General at the age of twenty-six. He had great experience and success in rounding up and fighting the Indians in the Southwest. In the panhandle of Texas and in the western portion of the Indian Territory the General had also punished the Comanches, Kiowas and Cheyennes, and wrested supremacy from them. In this campaign, many young men, since well known and celebrated, developed extraordinary capacity as Indian-fighters, in the true sense of the word, acquiring the ability of the best of scouts. Notable among

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these was Captain Emmett Crawford (afterward killed in a raid in old Mexico), General Lawton (afterward killed in the Philippines), Captain Chaffee, and Lieutenant Frank Baldwin, who have since achieved great distinction in the Cuban, Philippine and Chinese wars, like many others of that era, retiring with distinguished military honors and shoulder-straps of the highest grade, and also Captain Maus. General Miles, himself, developed peculiar qualities as a commander in frontier warfare, that ably fitted him for an experience of a winter campaign in the North.

After the Custer massacre, he was left in command on the Yellowstone, and erected huts for his troops and stores which were brought from the Missouri River by wagon. He built two posts, one on the Tongue River and one on the Yellowstone, near where is now the city of Glendive. As soon as these were completed, instead of waiting for spring and summer, he immediately planned to keep up activity against the red foe.

The Indians greatly annoyed his supply trains, and on one occasion the train had to return on account of the strength of the Indians. This roused the General's ire and, instead of the demoralized teamsters, he equipped it with soldiers as such, and fighting men to accompany them. Sitting Bull himself notified Colonel Otis that

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he must not travel that way, and Miles got after old "Bull" and overtook him at Cedar Creek. The wily chief sent a flag of truce, as he wished to pass the winter comfortably, and wanted permission to hunt and trade on condition that he did not attack the soldiers. But Miles would not temporize. He sent word that there was only one peace, and that was by submission. During this flag of truce they tried to trap him in the way in which General Canby lost his life in the Modoc Conference in '73; but Miles "coppered" the game, and told Sitting Bull: "I'll take no advantage of you under a flag of truce. You have fifteen minutes to get back to your people and fifteen minutes more to accept my terms, or I'll commence fighting. Either you or I have got to be boss of this part of the country."

Although the country swarmed with Indians, and no reply had come, Miles attacked them with such vigor that they left many of their dead on their field, which they never liked to do, and continued a hot pursuit for over forty miles, compelling them to abandon food, lodge poles, camp equipage, and ponies. Eventually, 400 lodges and 2,000 Indians surrendered and were sent to their agencies.

Sitting Bull and his hostile cronies left the main body and escaped northward, where he was joined by Gall and some other chiefs. This bit-

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ter experience was an astonishment to Sitting Bill and the Sioux, so that it left that section free from their immediate depredations. After a return to the Tongue River post and a short rest, the determined commander made up an expedition to follow Sitting Bull's trails northward, although it was obliterated by deep snow, and the winter had opened with great severity, even for that region. The suffering of the troops was intense. A month afterward, Frank Baldwin and the troops under Miles overtook and hammered old "Bull" on two occasions, and made it so warm for him in such a cold climate that he took refuge over the Canadian border. General Miles even made application for permission from the two Governments to follow him to a finish, but, for some reason, the higher authorities did not permit it. Sitting Bull's influence had always been ably seconded by Gall as a fighter, and here I want to say that everybody in the "know" recognized Gall as one of the bravest and gamest of fighting men that history has produced, white or red. Sculptors, painters, and anatomists recognized him as a striking specimen of a man physically. His personality is known to students of mankind in anthropological circles and among artists; his photograph and picture, with the magnificent head splendidly posed on a bust of extraordinary conformation, are to be found in many parts of Eu-

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rope as well as in the United States. On one occasion, in a fight with the troops, he was shot down and ridden over by the cavalry, and it is stated that an infantry soldier, in the excitement of the moment and to assure his death, drove his bayonet clean through his body and left it there, actually pinning him to the ground. His death seemed assured. Afterward a rain-storm came up which revived him, and he eventually crawled off in the darkness, and lived to lead the firing-line in the Custer and Reno fights. Years after, I saw the evidence of the wound in his stomach.

This Montana winter, almost continually below zero, and at times so cold that the mercury froze solid; with snow so deep that if Napoleon had had such to tackle he would never have got away from Moscow; with death-dealing blizzards periodical visitors—all tested the commander's and his men's inventive genius to overcome what up to then appeared an impossibility in the obstacles that a winter campaign presented.

The whole equipment and clothing of the soldiers had to be rearranged, and furs and buffalo-robes, deer-hides and beaver-skins, had to be drawn upon from the trading posts on the Missouri and from the agencies. For instance, leather belts of all kinds were replaced by canvas ones. Further explanations would take too long to relate, so suffice it to say that the winter cam-

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paign was effectively waged and a great battle was fought with Crazy Horse, who boldly attacked the command with a superior force. Crazy Horse was an Ogalalla chief, who led in the battle against Crook's command, was an important factor in the battle of the Little Big Horn, and was a demon in daring.

He gave the command a most determined fight, that nothing but the shrewdness of Miles won, as it waged for hours, the last part of the struggle being in a blinding snow-storm. Several chiefs were killed, and a big "medicine man," whom Indian superstition thought invincible, disheartened his followers. They fell back, but "Bear Coat," as they had nicknamed Miles, kept up the pursuit persistently, even with frost-bitten troops; and eventually John Bruguier, a half-breed and very gallant scout with the command, who got in communication at the risk of his life with Crazy Horse, convinced the wily chief that Miles meant what he said: "Surrender and go to the agency, or I will attack you every day and keep you awake at nights." This was finally consented to, and Crazy Horse was made to accept Miles's terms by his chiefs; nine remained as hostages, while he and 2,000 of his warriors surrendered at the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail agencies, and 500 Cheyennes, under White Bull,

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Two Moons, and Hump, surrendered at the Tongue River post.

Crazy Horse fretted under the restraint at Camp Robinson, and information showing that he was planning to leave the agency with some of the worst of the disaffected, it was thought best to arrest him. This brought about a fight, in which he was mortally wounded and died, smilingly defying the white man.

The Cheyennes who surrendered to Miles were treated by him in such a brotherly manner that he eventually gained their affection and from among them enlisted a corps, like the old Pawnees on the Platte, as scouts. The Cheyennes in this occupation became of immense service, never wavering in their loyalty, and became famous under Lieutenant Baldwin and Lieutenant Casey, who gained distinction with them in the Ghost Dance campaign, although that gallant officer met death himself from a hostile Sioux.

Miles's winter campaign, in short, was effective. The next May found Miles after the Minneconjous, under Lame Deer, whom he followed with pack trains and no encumbrances. He surprised them on the Muddy, and had them completely surrounded, while a dash by Lieutenant Casey had cut them off from their ponies. He hoped to have them surrender without further bloodshed. White Bull, the Cheyenne chief,

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was the medium. Their response to this was a rifle bullet through the arm and body of White Bull; but the offer was again repeated, and Lame Deer and his warrior, Iron Star, accepted and approached; but during the parley, Lame Deer stepped back, deliberately fired at the General, whose escape was miraculous, as his orderly, who was directly behind him, was killed by the shot. That settled the peace-making, and "pumping it into them" began, Lame Deer and Iron Star being among the first to fall. The rest were killed, captured or scattered, and thus fortunately escaped "Bear Coat," to add to his Indian-fighting record by the capture of Nez Percés Joseph (the noblest red Roman of them all), and Geronimo, the Apache (with all that that implies)—a soldier thrice badly wounded in the Civil War, and whose career extended from the burning sun and blistering sands of the staked plains and cacti lands of the Southwest to the blighting blasts of the blizzard lands of the Northwest; who found himself in command, admirably conducted and successfully finished the last of the Indian wars, in '90 and '91, which ended in the death of the misguided Sitting Bull; a man whose victories over the red men were accomplished with the utmost severity and determination, but who after their achievement was truly the Indian's friend—General Nelson A. Miles.

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A BUCKING BRONCO.

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CHAPTER XXIX

THE SLIM BUTTE FIGHT—DEATH OF AMERICAN HORSE AND MY SHADOW, "BUFFALO CHIPS"

American Horse.

THE successful retreat of the Sioux after their victory at Little Big Horn required quick action, and, after some useless marching of Terry and Crook combined, it was finally arranged that Terry and his commands were to retire, he to resume the command of his department, while his commands were to go back to Fort Abraham Lincoln, leaving General Crook to direct matters, with his excellent associate commanders, reënforced by General Nelson A. Miles, General McKenzie, and General Anson Mills. General Nelson A. Miles was left on the Yellowstone, and was afterward engaged all winter in building forts and supply points, fighting the Indians with extraordinary

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success under the most trying circumstances, and making a winter campaign in that extreme Northern climate, heretofore unequaled.

General Crook, pursuing his tireless methods, pursued the Indians in other directions—at times, Crook, and the Indians, too, being in a desperate, worn-out and exhausted condition, the Indians, if anything, having the advantage of game to eat, while he was compelled at times to live on horse-meat and mule. I remained with General Terry's command, and while operating north of the Yellowstone I was sent with despatches to Colonel Rice's detachment, making a trip that, ten years afterward, gained departmental recognition as a "dangerous mission," for which, at that late date, I received extra compensation of $1,200.

Colonel Anson Mills overtook a village of Indians at Slim Butte, under one of the most prominent chiefs of the day, American Horse. Mills, with Lieutenant Swatka (afterward of Arctic fame), attacked the village, achieving a great victory, but at some loss. Lieutenant Luettwitz had his knee shattered so badly that his leg had to be amputated on the field. American Horse and half a dozen warriors had concealed themselves in a cave in the ravine, from which they were doing great execution. He would not surrender, and as Crazy Horse and his warriors were known

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to be in the vicinity, and one hundred survivors of the village having returned to the attack, the position was at least dangerous. American Horse had killed three soldiers and wounded others.

Crook arrived on the scene and had the interpreters offer protection if he would surrender, which was received with a decided negative. He then ordered them to be dislodged, and the men advanced under a galling fire, Frank Gruard getting to the very mouth of the cave and killing one of the warriors. It was here that a man I dearly loved and trusted, who had stood beside me at many a trying time, had ridden many a weary ride and scouted with me under great difficulties, met his fate—Jim White, "Buffalo Chips."

A package of winter clothes had arrived for me by the river route, and, in parting, I had given him my best overcoat, a hat, and other togs, and his death for a while caused the Indians to report that Pe-Ha-Has-Ka (that is my Indian name) had fallen, and in several tribes there were held premature obituary rejoicings. While sorrowing for Jim, I was always proud that he made a good showing, and that he brought honor to his Western nickname, which was given to him in a spirit of raillery by no less a personage than General Phil Sheridan himself.

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I will let General Charles King, who was present, tell the story, which he has done in his history, *Campaigning with Crook:*

"This time it is not my purpose to write of 'Buffalo Bill,' but *for* him, of another whom I've not yet named. The last time we met—Cody and I—he asked me to put in print a brief notice of a comrade who was very dear to him, and it shall be done now.

"James White was his name; a man little known east of the Missouri, but on the plains he was 'Buffalo Bill's' shadow. I had met him for the first time at McPherson Station, in the Platte Valley, in 1871, when he came to me with a horse, and the simple introduction that he was a friend of Cody's. Long afterward we found how true and stanch a friend he was, for when Cody joined us at Cheyenne as chief scout, he brought White with him as assistant, and Bill's recommendation secured his immediate employment.

"On many a long day's march after that, White rode by my side along the flanks of the column, and I got to know him well. A simpler-minded, gentler frontiersman never lived. He was modesty and courtesy itself, conspicuous mainly because of two or three unusual traits for his class—he never drank, I never heard him swear, and no man ever heard him lie.

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"For years he had been Cody's faithful follower—half servant, half 'pardner.' He was Bill's 'fidus Achates.' Bill was his adoration. They had been boys together, and the hero-worship of extreme youth was simply intensified in the man. He copied Bill's dress, his gait, his carriage, his speech—everything he could copy; he let his long yellow hair fall low upon his shoulders, in wistful imitation of Bill's glossy brown curls. He took more care of Bill's guns and horses than he did of his own; and so, when he finally claimed, one night at Laramie, the right to be known by some other title than simple Jim White—something descriptive, as it were, of his attachment for Cody and his lifelong devotion to his idol, 'Buffalo Bill,' a prominent officer (General Sheridan) dubbed him 'Buffalo Chips,' and the name was a fixture.

"Poor, honest-hearted 'Chips'! His story was a brief one after we had launched out from where Cody left us to carry some despatches for Terry. 'Chips' remained in his capacity as scout, though he seemed sorely to miss his 'pardner,' whose last caution was: 'Jim, now don't be rash!'

"It was just two weeks after that we struck the Sioux at Slim Butte. You may remember that the Fifth had ridden in haste to the relief of Major Mills, who had surprised the Indians away in our front early on Saturday morning, had

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whipped them in panicky confusion out of their tepees into the neighboring rocks, and then had to fight on the defensive against ugly odds until we rode in to the rescue. As the head of our column jogged in among the lodges, General Carr directed us to keep on down to face the bluffs to the south, and Mills pointed to a ravine opening out into the village, with the warning: 'Look out for that gully; there are Indians hidden in there, and they've knocked over some of my men.'

"Everybody was too busy just then to pay much attention to two or three wounded Indians in a hole. We were sure of getting them when wanted. So placing a couple of sentinels where they could warn stragglers away from its front, we formed line along the south and west of the captured village, and got everything ready to resist the attack we knew they would soon make in full force.

"Half a dozen soldiers got permission to go over and join in, while the rest of us were hungrily hunting about for something to eat. The next thing we heard was a volley from the ravine, and saw the scouts and packers scattering for cover. One soldier held his ground—shot dead. Another moment, and it became apparent that not one or two but a dozen Indians were crouching somewhere in that narrow gorge, and the

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move to get them out assumed proportions. Lieutenant Clark, of General Crook's staff, sprang into the entrance, carbine in hand, and a score of cavalrymen followed, while the scouts and others went cautiously along either bank, peering warily into the cave-like darkness at the head. A squad of newspaper correspondents, led by that reckless Hibernian, Finerty, of the Chicago *Times,* came tearing over, pencil in hand, all eagerness for items, just as a second volley came from the concealed foe, and three more of their assailants dropped bleeding in their tracks. Now our people were fairly aroused, and officers and men by dozens hurried to the scene. The misty air rang with shots, and the chances looked bad for those redskins. Just at this moment, as I was running over from the western side, I caught sight of 'Chips' on the opposite crest. All alone, he was cautiously making his way, on hands and knees, toward the head of the ravine, where he could look down upon the Indians beneath. As yet, he was protected from their fire by the bank itself—his lean form distinctly outlined against the eastern sky. He reached a stunted tree that grew on the very edge of the gorge, and there he halted, brought his rifle close under his shoulder, in readiness to aim, and then raised himself slowly to his feet, lifted his head higher and higher, as he peered over. Suddenly a quick, eager light shone

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in his face, a sharp movement of his rifle, as though he were about to raise it to the shoulder, when bang!—a puff of white smoke floated up from the head of the ravine. 'Chips' sprang convulsively in the air, clasping his hands to his breast, and with one startled, agonizing cry: 'Oh, my God, boys! Good-by, Bill!' plunged heavily forward, on his face, down the slope—shot through the heart.

"Two minutes more, what Indians were left alive were prisoners, and that costly experience was at an end.

"Brave old American Horse had been shot through the bowels and died that night, notwithstanding the attention of the surgeons. The little band of Indians had sold their lives dearly, while they displayed all the bravery and courage of the Sioux.

"We buried poor 'Chips' in the deep ravine with our other dead, and no scout was more universally mourned than 'Buffalo Bill's' follower and devoted friend, Jim White."

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CHAPTER XXX

RECEIVED BY AN ARMY LINE OF BATTLE

Maj.-Gen. A. H. Terry.

THE junction of Generals Crook, Merritt and Carr's commands at Goose Creek brought together a trio of military experience, ability, push and determination that is absolutely necessary to successful Indian-fighters. This was more important, as the disaffection of the powerful Northern tribes had gathered in the field in aid of the hostiles an unusual number of Indians, all of whom were bent on war to the death. Sitting Bull occupied a very advantageous and strategic position, as he was located where he could receive reënforcements from an arc of a circle that permitted reenforcements to readily join him from five different agencies. While our command had cut off the main body of Southern Sioux from joining him,

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numbers had quietly slipped away, eluded the other troops, and massed in such numbers that they even challenged that grand old man, Crook. They swarmed so thickly in that then unknown country that our Indian allied scouts, though true as steel, expressed themselves as very doubtful as to a successful result to the white man in this campaign. To show the reader that we had no child's play, at that time when there should have been 12,873 men at Red Cloud Agency, there were but 4,760 Indians. At Spotted Tail and Rosebud, instead of 9,610, only 2,315 remained. At Cheyenne River, instead of 7,586, only 2,280 remained. At Standing Rock Agency, instead of 7,322, only 2,305 were on hand. In fact, there were at least 25,800 Indians less at these four agencies than the Indian Bureau's report showed.

Sitting Bull and his nucleus of continued hostiles generally averaged three or four thousand. That left about 29,000 Indians available for scouting, harassing, attacking and annoying us in a desultory method. The United States army, in all sections at that time, amounted to about 25,000 men. The country was entirely unknown, except to a few scouts, trappers, and such Indian allies as we could muster who had some hereditary hatred of the Sioux. The enemy were in a country every step of which they knew, and were familiar with every pass, canyon or ford that we

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could not avoid, enabling them to act aggressively to the best advantage. These three really great officers recognized the situation, and determined, no matter at what sacrifice of personal comfort to themselves and men, that they had to outdo the Indians, even in endurance, discomfort and hardship, as well as in pluck, to even recklessness. That is, the Indian can at times starve, and the white man must beat him as a starver. It is only the men who could starve, do without meat and drink, and outlast the red man in everything, that could hope to win. Therefore, after consultation, they decided to take our force of fighting men, 2,000 in number, with pack-mules, fifteen days' rations, and reserve ammunition, alone with them. The pack train of 160 wagons, with the drivers, discharged soldiers, and camp-followers only to guard them, were sent back to Fetterman. No man could take with him a change of clothing, had but a single blanket, besides a saddle blanket, his arms, a hundred rounds of ammunition, and four days' rations, on his horse. Officers and men alike, with a poncho for a covering and a saddle for a pillow, were allowed no tents; this will give the reader an idea of the necessities of the occasion and the physical discomforts that we were bound to face. But this meant, to all the command, that we would have the mobility of action equal to the Indian foe, as

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they had left all their impedimenta at the agencies—their one advantage over us being that they could get plenty of fresh game, which their presence would drive away from us, and could burn the grass to starve our ponies after their herds had feasted on it. These difficulties were continuous on our route, and with rainy days, cold nights, active marches, skirmishes and fights, actually became a warming-up diversion. Twenty-five miles a day were generally covered, and the reader can imagine some of the difficulties when on one day we crossed the crookedest stream in the world, the Tongue River, seventeen times, and still we accomplished a march of twenty-five miles. One day we had to camp all day from the intense smoke and fog mingled together, and that lost time had to be made up by a march in the darknight, which was awe-inspiring in its mysterious silence, broken only by the steady tramp, tramp, tramp of the iron-hoofed cavalry. The nights were as cold as midwinter; heat and dust are bad, but cold, sleet and mud are worse. At last, after many adventures, we reached the trail that Custer took on his fatal scout, and the horses were halted to give them a lunch on the grassy ground above the creek. I had gone a day ahead to reconnoiter, as it was near where we supposed we were to form a junction with General Terry's command.

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I succeeded in finding them, of course, but did not anticipate such a grand reception as was given me, or that the army would be placed in battle array to see such a humble guest. For half the day I had seen Indians and Indians had seen me; but by hiding occasionally in the woods and skirting through the timber, the latter, apparently, had not discovered me until, crossing a valley, I stumbled so close upon them that I was sure they could see me; but as they turned and flew I divined that they were some of Terry's Crow and Cree scouts.

I will refer to one of the press despatches of that era to give an account of this incident, one that has always been the most pleasant personally in my career, although saddened at the time by the fate of Custer. This despatch was sent from Terry's command that received me, and I think it can tell the story better than I could:

"Our march now lay through a succession of abandoned Indian camps, showing that we were on the trail of the Sioux. The bleached bones of buffaloes, and now and then the shaggy head of this monarch of the plains, testifying to the recent passage of Indian hunters, were met with from time to time scattered among the 'wickiups,' or temporary shelters made of

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saplings and tree branches; but, so far, no signs of the hostile Sioux were encountered. Our picturesque Crow and Cree allies had brought information of the near approach of the Sioux, and we were in hourly expectation that the savages would appear to dispute our progress. Plains, scarred by deep canyons, we passed, which might conceal an army from view, and yet were invisible at a few hundred yards distant. Right and left ran continuous lines of bluffs on either hand, offering positions that, defended by resolute and well-armed men, would be almost impregnable.

"Suddenly, while standing around a fire at a temporary stopping place, we were startled by a quick succession of unearthly yells, and, soon after, a band of Crows, painted hideously, burst into camp at full gallop. They reported 'Heap Sioux' coming toward us, more Sioux than they had ever seen before. This our informant expressed clearly in sign language, showing us the Sioux mounted and coming to cut our throats. The interpreter soon after arrived and confirmed our interpretation of the Indian sign-language. Soon we were startled by a simultaneous rush of the Cree scouts, who announced the Sioux. The troops immediately formed in line of battle, and the scene was an animated one. Two companies of the Seventh Cavalry, under Captain French and Lieutenant De Rudio, were to support the

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scouts in case of attack, while the column was properly arranged as well as the difficult nature of the ground would permit.

"One battalion of the Seventh Cavalry, under Captain Weir, formed a mounted skirmishing line, at full gallop, aided by the Second Cavalry, drawn up in column on their flank under General Grisbin and Lieutenant Low's battery of three guns. The trains were closed up, and the companies of the Fifth Infantry, under General Miles; the Sixty-sixth, under Colonel Moore, and the Twenty-second, under Colonel Otis, were extended along the flanks and moved in the rear as supports. For a few minutes all was expectation and anxiety.

"A single horseman advanced from the timber, and there was a muttered exclamation from many mouths: 'There they come!' As we strained our ears for the report of the first gun, the horseman advanced toward the skirmishers, making signs of friendship. It proved to be Bill Cody, the scout, better known as 'Buffalo Bill,' dressed in the magnificence of the border fashion. He announced that we were in front of General Crook's command, and said we might put off all bloody thoughts for that day. Such a reception probably no man ever received, as warm in its greeting as would have been the warmth of the reception of the hostile Sioux."

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It was, indeed, one of the grand days of my life, and, when the two commands joined together, joy reigned supreme and hardships were forgotten.

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WYOMING GIRLS OUT FOR HEALTH.

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CHAPTER XXXI

LIEUTENANT DE RUDIO'S HAIRBREADTH ESCAPE

General Crook.

WHEN Terry's and Crook's commands, thus joined together, went into camp and guards were placed to prevent surprise, the afternoon and evening were spent in a pleasant reunion. It was remarkable to notice the difference in the two outfits, as our (Crook's) officers had nowhere to receive and no refreshments to offer, and, as Terry had traveled fully equipped, with over 160 wagons of supplies, their horses had been grained, they were in good condition to act as hosts, and we splendidly as appreciative guests, with an appetite.

Crook, Merritt and Carr were in rough hunting campaign rigs, and among the whole staff there was not a complete uniform. Deerskin, buckskin, flannels, corduroy, canvas and rags

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prevailed, so that you could hardly tell an officer from a private, and old chums from West Point days laughed at us for our border-ruffianish, unshaved appearance. Even the unfortunate Seventh Cavalry seemed to be in a well-kept condition, and one of our officers exclaimed in envy: "Great Scott! look at Reno's tent! Why, it is splendidly carpeted!" But we received a generous amount of courtesies from them, while we well tested the contents of their commissary wagons.

A great part of the night was spent in exchanging reminiscences of the late stirring events. One of the most thrilling personal experiences that I ever heard was that of Lieutenant De Rudio, who was cut off from Reno's command and spent two days and nights filled with such narrow escapes and blood-curdling dangers as to make, under the conditions, the most callous man's hair stand on end. Sitting around the camp-fire over our pipes, he related the story of his escape but a few days before, and so vividly as to make one almost feel the ghostly proximity of the red man.

In the fight he was guarding a pony-crossing with eight men, when one of them said: "Lieutenant, get your horse—quick! Reno's retreating!" But as no trumpet had been sounded, and no order had been given, he hesitated and waited

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for the call. As the men had seen the others retreating, they unceremoniously left, and De Rudio, seeing the guidon left behind, rode back to get it, which he did, but saw thirty-five or forty Indians coming. He dashed off, and they fired a volley; but leaning low on his horse, it went high over him. He rode into the thick underbrush, when they fired many shots into the woods, the bullets cutting the branches all around him. He crossed the creek, scrambling up the bank, when suddenly he saw hundreds of Indians in front of him, not fifty yards distant, shooting at the retreating soldiers, with their backs toward him. He instantly saw that he was entirely cut off. While thinking how desperate a run for it it would be, the thought of wife and children nerved him, and he was about to brave it, when a young Indian, about thirty yards distant on the right, fired and killed his horse. The shot attracted the other Indians, and De Rudio jumped down the bank, hiding in an excavation; and several volleys were fired, so accurately, seemingly, that the Indians thought he must be killed. A terrible yelling began among the Indians, and all at once the firing ceased. Peering out, he saw the cause. Captain Benteen's column was coming over the hills, and had attracted their attention. It aroused the hope that they would come near enough for him to join them, but, in a few

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minutes, they disappeared, and the Indians all started off in that direction. Reno's command had evidently rallied and they all got together, so his only hope was to crawl around under the underbrush, and get as near Reno's command as he could, which he could plainly see. At the same time there was a movement on another hill on the right, and he thought he saw for a moment General Custer and some officers, and then they disappeared. While quietly going through the brush, he heard a whispered: "Lieutenant! Lieutenant!" Then he recognized Private O'Neil of "G" Troop, and Gerard, interpreter, and Scout Jackson. The two latter had horses, but O'Neil's had been killed.

Gerard and Jackson would not desert their horses, fearing they would neigh or be seen, as Indians were passing back and forth, attracted by heavy firing on the village, which must have been the Custer fight. As they refused to leave the horses, he started with O'Neil afoot on their own hook.

At one time an Indian rode within a few feet of them, cut a switch, and went on. They were then at the edge of a clearing, which they dared not cross until dark, and they hid themselves between some driftwood in a hole, placing their cartridges all around handy, and ready for the expected attack.

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Two shots were fired in close proximity, and they thought they were gone. Peering out, he saw that it was Indian women who were mutilating the bodies of some dead soldiers. Searching around the ground, they came so near that they were tempted to fire at them.

The Indians seemed to be, although occupied, suspicious that some were still around the bushes, and so set fire to the timber. The smoke and flames forced them out of their hiding place, just as Jackson and Gerard joined them, having left their horses where they first met, stuffing grass in their nostrils to prevent them from attracting attention. Wrapping their blouses around their heads, they succeeded in escaping into the thick brush along the bank of the creek. From here they saw that McDougall had joined Reno with the pack-train. At the finish of the firing in the direction where Custer was, hundreds of Indians returned, and the fight on the hill was kept up all night. The two scouts got their horses, and, with O'Neil and De Rudio holding the tails, decided to ford the river under darkness at the place where they had crossed in the morning. By making a detour round the Indians, and as it was dark, they passed close to three bands of red men without molestation, O'Neil and De Rudio on these occasions keeping alongside the horses and out of sight. The fourth party came along

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and shouted to them in Sioux, and Jackson and Gerard cut loose and the two afoot dropped and hid in the sage-brush.

The Indians pursued the horsemen a short distance, firing shots at them, but did not see the two men in the brush, although they passed in single file within three or four feet of them.

O'Neil and he reached the ford and decided to secrete themselves and wait until daylight. The moon came out but dimly, and they saw a party that looked like American cavalry, as they were on American horses and dressed in the soldier's uniform, the leader riding a sorrel horse with four white legs. He was sure that it was Captain Tom Custer. Elated, he cried out: "Hello, Captain!" The rider stopped, and, although they could not see him, a fiendish yell and a volley of bullets told them they were Indians. They rushed through the brush, the Indians firing at the moving bushes volley after volley. Their escape was miraculous.

It turned out afterward that these Indians, by their firing, spoiled a bit of stratagem they had arranged to deceive Reno, by dressing in the clothes of dead soldiers of Custer's command, and, equipped with clinking sabres and on American horses, they expected to deceive them in the night, by pretending to be men of Custer's party. This firing at De Rudio and giving the Indian

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yell put the Reno men on their guard. Proceeding on their way, two Indians came hunting for the fugitives, believing, of course, that it was only some wounded soldier. While hunting for them they approached within five yards, and, evidently having seen them, one jumped from his horse, when De Rudio fired and dropped him dead, O'Neil's carbine knocking the other one out of his saddle and killing him. The Indians in the hills saw the flash and puff and fired another volley in that direction, but the two desperate men hastily concealed themselves behind a big log which several bullets had struck. The bullets struck the ground within a few feet and even inches of them continuously.

Again the woods were fired at this point, but as it had been rainy in the evening the smoke was stronger than the flames, and was thus their salvation, and they hid in a deep part of the creek with only their heads out of water, but with their cartridges and firearms on the bank ready for action. They remained there, and in a little oasis of bushes that the fire had not touched, without moving or speaking, until nine o'clock on the 26th of June. About four o'clock there were two signal pistol-shots fired, the Indian vidette left his post at the ford, and a loud voice was heard haranguing the Indians, and a band of three or four hundred passed closely and rode off. They

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could see them for miles down the river, and heard them singing a peculiar chant. By six-thirty they had gone as far as they could see, and it was evident that something had caused them to move away, as it appeared to them that the troops must have also left the hill.

Hungry, exhausted and dispirited, their condition can be imagined. The command gone, and they a hundred miles from the Yellowstone River! However, when everything was quiet, in the dark night, they started in the direction of Reno's retreat, and after about five miles they came to a high hill, from which they saw a fire. At times the fire disappeared, and they concluded that there must be human beings passing around it, which hid it occasionally from sight. But what kind of human beings? Indians or white? There was the rub. They crawled on with great cautiousness, fearing the Indians would have to be crawled through even to reach Reno, if it was Reno, when their hearts were raised by the braying of a mule. Still, he might be a captured mule, so they crept along on their bellies cautiously until they got so near that they heard voices talking in English. They crawled within a hundred yards of the visible party, and called out to the picket who they were, De Rudio and O'Neil: "For God's sake, don't shoot!" A cheer from the picket, and, in a few minutes,

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the tired and famished survivors of many mental deaths were munching crackers and coffee with Captain Varnum. What must have been the feelings of these men going through that forty-eight hours of hope and despair, alternately dominating, can only be remembered by the man who was one of the first to ford the Little Big Horn going west, and the last to ford it going east—as he is sitting at his fireside, in honorable retirement now in California—Major Charles De Rudio.

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CHAPTER XXXII

SITTING BULL AND "THE MAN IN THE DARK"

Sitting Bull.

As THESE short descriptions of events, deserving more extensive reference than possible here, are nearing a close, and have covered a period with which his name is associated, it is fitting that the general reader should be given a little insight into the character of the famed Sioux Indian—Sitting Bull. After remaining in Canada until his people were leaving him and returning to their reservations, having only a remnant of his immediate following and family left, he himself consented to return, under conditions that would be favorable to his followers, while he was assured of immunity from personal punishment.

He was wise enough to know that his absence was weaning many from obedience to his sway,

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and martyrdom at a distance, he thought, was not as effective in retaining popularity and power as would be persecution under the eyes of his people. He, therefore, rightly chose to take his medicine on his native heath—where his every action would have the effect that the accomplished actor strives for with his audience; every agitator tries for with the masses; every demagogue essays when trying to sway the mob. Exercising the cunning of an arch-schemer, allied to an undoubted racial pride and patriotism that the future historian, devoid of our generation's view of the Indian question, unprejudiced and unbiased, may be justified in recording as the action of a savage largely endowed with the courage of his convictions, of incorruptible loyalty to his people, a stickler for their treaty rights, a native politician who if schooled a little more in diplomacy and its concealment of designs would class him as the great Indian statesman. In war his bitter opponent, in peace he won my friendship and sympathy; he impressed me as a deep thinker; conscientious as to the proper rights to the lands of their fathers, he advanced arguments that were strong and convincing. His claim of primitive possessions for ages beyond the white man's coming; of the conditions being undisturbed for centuries and existing as the Great Manitou had ordained; the bountiful supplies he

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had furnished on land and in the waters; of wild fruit, wild fowl, wild cattle; abundance of wild horses, verdure to support them without the plowman's weary work—all furnished him an argument that the disturbance and compulsory change to its heirs of this legacy was arbitrary, unjust to the verge of what we would call sacrilegious interference with the Divine will.

He had all the old treaties in his head in the Indian legendary manner, also in hieroglyphics; but in writing and printed type he had an extract from the treaty of 1868, by which the Sioux Reservation of Dakota was set apart "for the absolute and undisturbed use and occupation of the Indians, and upon which no outsiders but Government employees shall be allowed to pass, settle, or reside." And the Big Horn country was set apart as a hunting-ground! The old man had this well-worn parchment in a buckskin cover, and treasured it as one would the articles or legacy to one's birthright.

Basing his case, like a lawyer, he would introduce it as a silent witness, justifying his actions, and, with keen eyes, he would watch it carefully, so that it could not be tampered with; and while, of course, he could not read, he had marks on this sacred totem that he was familiar with. His eagle eye would scan the face of the reader of it to see the effect, and, on its return, his face inti-

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mated strongly the triumph it gave him as a claimant to a clear title.

Sitting Bull had a very strong, determined face, a splendid head, well set on a long-bodied, short-legged frame. I have seen artists in England frame his profile with the collar, necktie and hair of the statesman of Hawarden, producing a perfect profile of Gladstone; also with the same hat and neckwear like unto Bismarck.

I will give a general idea of the old man's description of conditions, results, and the power to him of some mysterious man that was invisible, being in the dark—away East.

That the white man at this time had taken most of the land, had destroyed or driven away the game, and that the least he could do was to halt and leave Sioux people undisturbed, the white men representing the Great Father having in 1868 made the treaty to that effect. Others had arranged with them to build an "iron road," with a "horse that ate wood, breathed fire and smoke," to draw wagons and emigrants quickly across their country (to Oregon, Washington and California) toward the setting sun. With pleasure they agreed. When this road was built, it was only as wide as his outstretched arms, but the "Man in the Dark" had taken from them lands twenty miles in width for hundreds of miles. "The Man in the Dark" is known to us as the

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"corporations," and it was intensely interesting, as far back as 1885, to hear this old Indian score, from his point of view, the same combination, for its encroachment, that has aroused such a commotion in political, commercial and social circles among to-day's white leaders of public thought and the protectors "of the peepul's rights."

His arguments, as I see them now, covered every one that the unselfish advocate of communal existence can advance, practicable when the so-called "civilized man" has become as contented as was the primitive children of prairie land and forest—but lacking which, this survival of the fittest seems to decree the fate of the Indian and control the relative prosperity of the white. The fire horse caused prairie fires; his attendants increased until they came with shovel, spade and carpenter tools. They first erected tepees, got lonely and brought their squaws. Their friends soon came to join them, and soon wooden tepees were built, and camps became villages, and villages towns, until cities were filled with crowds of people (such as Bismarck, Mandan, etc.). Then the "Man in the Dark" sold the land.

Later, when the crops failed and the lessee did not pay, he kicked the tenant out and resold the land. He took the money back in the dark toward the rising sun. If a poor man had no money he could not ride, but there was plenty of room;

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he had to walk—often to die by the roadside of hardships or starvation, if some Samaritan Indian did not feed him. The "Man in the Dark" never came there when he and his chief made complaints. No one was responsible. They were told to send letters or speak by the lightning to the "Man in the Dark," but he never answered. When the Government treaties were broken, a similar discourteous lack of consideration occurred. "My chiefs and me, who signed, were always here. The Great Father's head men [General Harney and others] were not. They never returned. New white chiefs took their places, and every four years new Great Fathers took power, and their men laughed at what their predecessors had done. When the Sioux left Minnesota and went beyond the Mississippi and Missouri, the great white fighting chiefs promised them they would never be disturbed. Now they send military and give me only a prairie chicken's flight four ways, saying that is enough and all I need [160 acres of land], while the 'Man in the Dark' was selling hundreds of acres of land that he did not want out here. Again, he was a powerful white chief with plenty of land that once belonged to the Indians, and lived toward the rising sun—this 'Man in the Dark.'"

Sitting Bull's fateful end will form another and succeeding story.

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CHAPTER XXXIII

DEATH OF SITTING BULL

Major Burke.

THE breaking of treaties so frequently, and the invasion of the Black Hills and other sections by the gold-seekers, prospectors and trappers, became the cause of constant irritation, leading to almost continual contests, raids and massacres. This condition had really brought on the war of 1875-1876, resulting in the Custer fight as well as its many succeeding clean-ups.

The forfeiture of the Black Hills and injudicious reductions of rations kept discontent alive. When, in 1889, Congress passed a law dividing the Sioux Reservation into many smaller ones, so as to isolate the different tribes or clans of the Dakota Nation, a treaty was submitted to their vote, whereby, by reinstating the cut-off rations

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TYPICAL GIRL ROUGH RIDER OF THE WEST.

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and paying for ponies captured or destroyed in the '76 war, and other certain conditions, they ceded about one-half their land—11,000,000 acres. Fulfilment of conditions was delayed—postponed—forgotten, almost—by Congress. This voting was carried by a narrow majority; and the strong minority, the same as the white election losers, claimed bribery and corruption, *i.e.*, ballot-box stuffing. Even after the land was being settled up, Congress had still neglected the appropriations, and Sitting Bull's power was again in the ascendant.

At this time, through some mysterious mountain phantom or trickster, the "medicine men" became easy victims of a craze, fashioned after that when the Christians followed the appearance of the Man of Galilee. This was based on the assertion that the Messiah (the Manitou) was coming back on earth to use his miraculous power in favor of the red man to crush out the whites; to restore everything to the idealistic condition of former years; re-stock the ranges with big game, buffalo, elk, deer, etc., etc. This created a universal fanatical fervor, and not alone among the Sioux, but affected all Indians on this continent. Former foes became fast friends, and from the Yaquis in old Mexico to the Alaskan tribes in the Far North, the religious ghost-dance festivities fanned the flames of war. The "medicine

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men's" preaching that the holy medicinal ghost-shirts would protect the wearer, turn the white man's bullets, was accepted and made recruits by thousands to the cause. The dancing frightened the settlers, shocked the religious, philanthropic friends of the Indians, and was officially ordered stopped. "Easy orders, eh?" Instead, if they had been allowed to dance, even if some did so to the death, exhaustion, like a boiler's safety-valve, and an afterthought might soon have made it appear to them in the ridiculous light that so effectively kills absurdities. The ghost-shirts had never been tested, when a few shooting scrapes did occur, and the inaccuracy of bad shots was attributed to miraculous virtues in the anointed vestments.

I was at the time in Alsace-Lorraine with my exhibition, and had with me seventy-five traveled Indians. We had all the facts, and myself and partner decided to close, camp the rest of the outfit in an old castle near Strasburg (Benfeld), with a large domain, and I myself left by fast steamer via England for New York, while Major Burke, with the Indians as pacifiers, came via Antwerp and Philadelphia, and hastened to the scene of strife.

The Indians brought home made a strong peace contingent at Pine Ridge, while I hastened, with General Miles's approbation, to visit Sitting

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Bull in person, feeling sure that my old enemy and later friend would listen to my advice. The fact that I was willing to take the risk myself alarmed some well-meaning philanthropists, who divined a sinister motive in my action; and those who were crying strongest for Sitting Bull's suppression now claimed that his person was endangered by the bloodthirsty voyager—I, the one who had everything to lose and nothing particular to gain. Going to a hostile camp of Indians, risking all on the card of friendship and man-to-man respect (willing to test the ghost-dance shirt in fair individual, single-handed way, perhaps, if pushed); but alone, and, above all, desirous to save my red brother from a suicidal craze. They impressed President Harrison that it would create a war, ending in the death of Sitting Bull. So the commander-in-chief, the President, was constrained to act (afterward, in Indianapolis, to express regret for it to me personally) and my mission was countermanded at the threshold almost of the hostile camp. Sitting Bull's death and the Ghost Dance War followed.

Then came the army and the Indian agent. Left to himself, in conjunction with his coadjutor, the army officer, that most efficient and famous among the best Indian agents, Major James McLaughlin (now Inspector), would have probably brought about a peaceful solu-

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tion. But Eastern meddlesome energy demanded action—action against this horrid religious innovation—and they forced the market by their innuendoes and long-distance fears.

All interested, in my best belief, were pushed, and Colonel Drum, commandant at Fort Yates, and Major McLaughlin were ordered to cooperate to secure the person of Sitting Bull.

"Henry Bull," Lieutenant of Indian police, had intimated that the old chief was "preparing his horses for a long ride." Couriers were sent to tell him to quietly arrest Sitting Bull, and Major Edmond G. Fatchet, of the Eighth Cavalry, and a Hotchkiss gun were sent to support him.

After a hard ride, just at dawn, they saw a man coming at full speed on Sitting Bull's favorite, White Horse (a Kentucky charger I had presented him three years before), whom they found to be an Indian policeman with the report of a fight: "All police killed!" Riding like mad, they arrived to find some Indian police still fighting from Sitting Bull's cabin, being surrounded on all sides.

Volley after volley was poured in unexpectedly on the besiegers, and a few shells from the Hotchkiss gun scattered them, and the beleaguered were relieved. They had reached Sitting Bull's cabin at 5 a. m., surrounded it, and, capturing the old

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chief in bed, arrested him. While dressing, his son, Crowfoot, alarmed the camp. Bull harangued his friends, frenzied by the thought, no doubt, that his own tribesmen were his captors, not feeling that respect for them he would have had for the military.

Catch-the-Bear and Strike-the-Kettle dashed in and fired, hitting Bull Head in the side, who fired and killed Sitting Bull. The latter firing as he fell, Shave Head was shot in the abdomen, and all three fell together. The fight became general, until the arrival of Major Fatchet and several police, and many ghost-dancers were killed, they not having time to utilize their shirts. Thus was ended the life of the chief whose faults and virtues will long be a subject of discussion, but who will always stand as a great red chief of the Uncapappa Sioux—Sitting Bull.

I returned to Nebraska and was ordered by Governor Thayer (being a Brigadier-General on his staff) to join the Nebraska National Guard with General Colby, and entered the field at Pine Ridge, placing the militia in position effectively to assist in surrounding the hostiles. Then I joined General Miles as advisory scout (Frank Gruard being at headquarters), and used my personal influence to pacify the Indians. Through Major-General Miles's stern measures and at the same time his diplomatic methods, the great-

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est planned of Indian uprisings was quickly suppressed through the bloody battles of Wounded Knee and The Mission, so as to make it the very last possible struggle of the red man—the finale of all Indian wars.

I had the satisfaction at least of attending the final ceremonies, and, with a score of my old commanders and many comrades of the '60's, '70's and '80's, was on hand to welcome the era of good-will to each other, clasp hands in friendship and smoke the pipe of peace in brotherhood forever between the white man and the red.

From the New York *Herald,* August 18, 1876:

"Camp of General Crook's Command,
Goose Creek, August 4, 1876.

"Before sunset, the Fifth Cavalry, to whom couriers had been sent, and who for a few hours had lost all reckoning as to our whereabouts, marched into the valley, with their supply wagon close on their heels. The appearance of the regiment was fine, despite the dust and fatigue of the march, and gladdened the eyes of every one who had been waiting their arrival.

"William Cody, the celebrated 'Buffalo Bill,' arrived with General Merritt, and is undoubtedly, alone, a strong reënforcement of the intelligent efficiency of the force in the field. In the recent

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scout after the Cheyennes, who were attempting to join Sitting Bull, he displayed all the old bravery and deadly prowess which have made him a hero in the hearts of the worshippers of melodrama and tales of adventure. He and Frank Gruard are probably the finest scouts now in active service. The Indian auxiliaries under Washaku, a friendly Shoshone, were delighted to behold the 'heap pony soldiers' arrive yesterday, for they had begun to believe that the White Chief was possessed of a forked tongue, and that he could receive no succor. The fighting forces of the command move forward at once."

THE END

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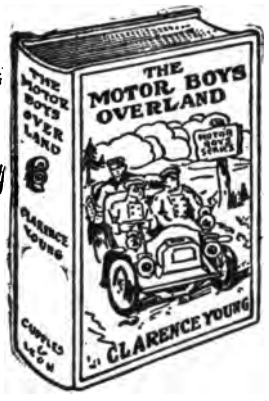

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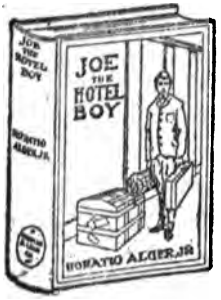

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